Australia is the only developed country where trachoma persists. In contrast to other countries, it has largely been assumed that lack of access to antibiotics and health services is not a major contributor to the persistence of trachoma in Australia. We assessed the relationship between reported treatment with azithromycin, levels of treatment required on WHO guidelines and the supply of azithromycin.

Methods Data on the supply of azithromycin to health services (2007/2008) was obtained from Medicare Australia. The reported treatment with azithromycin reported by individuals and trachoma prevalence was estimated based on data from the National Trachoma Surveillance and Reporting Unit (NTSRU) in 2008.

Results Reported treatment by Azithromycin was below levels suggested WHO guidelines. This disparity occurred despite the presence of sufficient available doses at health services.

Conclusion All aspects of the SAFE strategy are important in the eradication of trachoma. However, improving the supply and distribution of azithromycin is relatively easy to implement, fund and monitor. This study highlights the importance of continued focus on the delivery of azithromycin in the treatment of trachoma.

SP5-30 EVALUATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TRACHOMOA TREATMENT GUIDELINES IN AUSTRALIA

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Introduction Trachoma control guidelines for the WHO recommend the SAFE strategy which includes surgery for trichiasis, antibiotic treatment, facial cleanliness and environmental improvement.

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