

## **Missouri Biotechnology Association Partner Highlight**

### **AdvaMed Applies Pandemic's Lessons to an Even Brighter Medical Device Future**

The Advanced Medical Technology Association (AdvaMed) is the world's leading trade organization representing medical technology and device companies. AdvaMed represents more than 400 medical device manufacturers, from the smallest start-ups to the largest medical technology innovators. Its members operate all over the United States and the world. They produce the medical devices, diagnostic tests, and health information systems that are transforming health care through earlier disease detection, less invasive procedures, and more effective treatments.

AdvaMed is pleased to collaborate with the Missouri Biotechnology Association on shared goals and policy objectives to deliver life-saving, life-enhancing medicines and therapies to patients, with a steadfast presence in the daily practice of medicine.

### **The COVID-19 Response**

The pandemic provided new, widespread public visibility to medical devices, diagnostics, supplies, and technology. It shed light on effective strategies for serving patients and navigating the new challenges brought on via a global health emergency.

The personal protective equipment, diagnostic tests, vaccine syringes, ventilators, and tubing used to detect, diagnose, and treat COVID-19 were in sudden, extensive demand. Medtech manufacturers quickly retooled factories where possible and navigated global supply chain shortages to meet pandemic needs. Diagnostics manufacturers mobilized to rapidly develop, produce, and distribute the tests and testing instruments needed to support patient care and public health. The industry communicated extensively with government agencies and Congress on how best to deploy public and private resources to serve health care professionals, patients, and the general public.

The response required agility and action from multiple federal agencies and programs, emergency funding from Congress, and industries including the medical device industry. The ebbing of the most severe depth of the pandemic now offers an opportunity to analyze what policies, procedures, and funding levels and flexibility worked well and what could be improved. Congress asked for stakeholder input on these points. AdvaMed is weighing in with Congress in detail on recommendations for legislative changes that would enhance future public health emergencies, given the hard-won lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic.

An important note is that routine medical technology work continued in addition to the pandemic response. Medtech companies continued to manufacture and deploy non-COVID-19 materials. Cancer diagnostic tests, heart valves, pacemakers, catheters, and surgical kits, gowns, and drapes all continued production and use, as routine medical needs persisted throughout the pandemic. The medtech industry is stable, reliable, and ever-evolving with new technology for patient benefit. These factors are critical to the daily practice of medicine, before, during, and after a pandemic.

### **Supply Chain Challenges, Solutions**

The pandemic created a confluence of events that have tested and continue to challenge the medtech industry unlike ever before. The global surge in demand for medical products combined with upstream

raw material and input shortages, transportation challenges, COVID restrictions and export controls, all contributed to unprecedented supply chain challenges for the industry that are likely to grow with the current geopolitical crisis.

AdvaMed members have responded by ramping up production, activating multiple suppliers, reconfiguring technologies, and forging partnerships with the U.S. government to identify areas where government intervention is necessary to ensure the continuity of patient care. The semiconductor chips shortage in particular has dramatically impacted the medtech industry, which is heavily reliant on chips but only one percent of the overall market. AdvaMed is working with the U.S. government and relevant stakeholders to press for the prioritization of healthcare as the industry navigates these and other supply shortages.

To address seemingly endless transportation challenges, AdvaMed in partnership with the Health Industry Distributors Association, the International Safety Equipment Association, the White House, and several West Coast ports [launched tools](#) to expedite the transport of medical supplies and equipment. Together, the organizations are finding new ways to get medical supplies and equipment into the hands of healthcare providers and frontline workers more quickly and efficiently.

### **Remote Care and Telehealth Transformation**

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the value of digital health technologies, including remote care and telehealth services. During the pandemic, Medicare used its waiver authority to temporarily expand coverage of telehealth services into urban areas, allow providers to practice remote care even across state lines through telehealth, and expand the types and locations of services that can be provided through telehealth. The expansion of telehealth supported by these temporary flexibilities proved the effectiveness of telehealth for Medicare beneficiaries, especially for the growing number of patients aged 85 years or older and those with multiple chronic conditions.

AdvaMed supports proposed measures in Congress to extend these flexibilities beyond the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency and to direct studies evaluating the impact of expanded telehealth access.

### **Looking Forward**

AdvaMed and its members synthesized lessons learned from the pandemic, in manufacturing, logistics, and public policy, and are adjusting practices for an even more efficient response to and anticipation of the next pandemic.

Continuing to transform the health care delivery system and the practice of medicine through innovative technologies helping patients live better, more comfortable lives is what AdvaMed and its members are embracing as the pandemic's lessons take hold and compel positive change. AdvaMed looks forward to continuing its successful partnership with the Missouri Biotechnology Association on numerous shared goals.