

At this pivotal moment for our industry, given the impact of tariffs, AdvaMed—the Medtech Association—and Swiss Medtech, the leading medical technology association in Switzerland, are urgently calling for reciprocal “zero for zero” medical technology tariffs between the United States and Switzerland, as well as a regulatory model in Switzerland that takes into account FDA approvals and clearances (both PMA as well as 510(k)), to ensure health care and patient access for lifesaving and life-enhancing technologies.

Swiss Medtech’s more than 800 members reflect the diversity of the medical technology industry and range from start-ups to established, large companies, both regional and international. With 71,700 employees and a contribution of 11.9% to the positive trade balance, medical technology is an economically significant and job-creating sector in Switzerland. Swiss Medtech advocates for conditions that enable the medtech industry to perform at peak capacity and provide first-class medical care.

Switzerland has the 8th largest medical device market in Europe and plays a significant role in medical technology research and development. The Swiss medtech sector is predominantly made up of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Of the approximately 1,400 medtech companies based in Switzerland, 95% employ fewer than 250 people. In contrast, 5% of the largest companies employ roughly half of all individuals working in the Swiss medtech sector. Industry turnover in 2023 was CHF 23.4 billion. The industry reinvests approximately 12% of its turnover in research and development (R&D).

AdvaMed is the world’s largest medical technology trade association, representing 600-plus member companies and medtech innovators. AdvaMed’s mission is ensuring greater access to lifesaving medical technologies, treatments, and diagnostic tools for doctors and patients. The United States is the largest medtech market, and it accounts for 3 million direct/indirect U.S. jobs in all 50 states across nearly 17,000 U.S. manufacturing plants.

The medical technology industry in both the US and in Switzerland is one of the most innovative and critical sectors for transatlantic trade. Our industry produces innovative and essential products that save and improve lives and enable the delivery of quality health care in both countries. Examples of these technologies include MRIs, orthopedic implants, pacemakers, diabetes technologies, wound care products, in vitro diagnostics, radiotherapy, surgical instruments, and personal protective equipment. Our industry’s products are constantly transforming global health care, through earlier disease detection, less invasive procedures and more effective treatments. The medical technology sector is a cornerstone industry for both the Swiss and US economies, driving advancements in health care, enabling health systems to function at their highest potential, driving economic growth and employment, and contributing significantly to improved health outcomes.

Recent trade tensions and the threat of tariffs are posing a serious threat to our respective health technology industries and to the health systems, health care professionals and patients who depend on us to ensure timely access to treatment.

Our industry is also unique in that, unlike most products that are paid for directly by consumers, our largest payors are the governments themselves through their health care systems. Any national revenue raised through tariffs could be offset by higher costs to the taxpayers who fund those programs. Furthermore, medtech companies often operate in a generally fixed-reimbursement environment through multi-year contracts established with the thousands of hospitals and clinics across the United States and Switzerland.

Also, because our industry is highly regulated and our products are highly complex, some with upwards of 1,000 component parts, shifting supply chains in the near term is complicated: FDA and Swissmedic oversee what products are put on the market and inspect manufacturing facilities and components, and then the health care systems largely determine the reimbursement for procedures using medtech products.

Medical technology supply chain leaders across the industry are reporting that “procurement timelines have already slipped within the first week of the new tariffs—especially for surgical kits, diagnostic components, and imaging devices.” This is concerning news, yet there is still time to ensure it does not

devolve into a crisis. We believe a way to successfully navigate the turbulence, and eliminate the consequences we have discussed, is for the United States and Switzerland to agree to:

- “Zero for zero” tariffs on trade in medical technology between the US and Switzerland. This would allow our industry to continue to allocate its resources to the greatest benefit for patients and the health care systems, ensuring the quality, innovation and availability of our industry’s wide range of lifesaving and life-improving products.
- Advance the US and Swiss ongoing development of a world-class regulatory system for medical technology that leverages best practices from trusted regulators where Switzerland takes into account regulatory approvals and clearance from the FDA, including PMA and 510(k). Such facilitated conformity assessment procedures would expand access to innovation for patients, enable Switzerland to continue to provide the best in clinical care, and ensure it continues to be a global leader for medical technology research and innovation.