

## **Advancing Improved Healthcare Access Through MedTech– Problem Statement**

Healthcare in the United States is challenged regarding the ability of all patients to access appropriate care when needed. Differences in access to care can impact care pathways and outcomes for patients resulting in significant, long-lasting impacts on their health and wellness. This impact can be especially profound for groups that have been economically and/or socially marginalized. The Advanced Medical Technology Association (AdvaMed) advocates for all patients to have the opportunity to achieve optimal health.

Barriers, linked to exclusionary practices, have contributed to these access differences.<sup>1</sup>

- In a study of remote patient monitoring (RPM) for patients with heart failure, female patients were more likely to be under-referred for RPM, including remote hemodynamic monitoring, cardiac implantable electronic devices, wearables, and telehealth interventions.<sup>2</sup>
- In a study among candidates for cochlear implants, individuals in the highest income quintile had lower odds of cochlear implant candidacy compared with those in the lowest income quintile; however, candidates in the highest income quintile had greater odds of undergoing surgery compared to those in the lower quintile; living in a small town or rural area was associated with lower odds of undergoing surgery compared with living in a metropolitan area.<sup>3</sup>
- In a cohort study of adolescents (aged 14 – 18), those with autism or other developmental disabilities were more likely to have diagnoses of menstrual disorders or polycystic ovary syndrome compared to those without; they were also less likely to visit an ob-gyn, or to use treatments to address these and other gynecological conditions.<sup>4</sup>

Reasons for lack of access are manifold and include differential access to educational and professional opportunities, and insurance coverage for some populations; provider behaviors based on stereotypes and assumptions; and lack of education about treatment options, to name a few.

In addition, several communities are often missing from clinical studies for medical devices and technologies.<sup>5</sup> This long-standing problem makes it difficult to determine which devices are applicable, safe, and effective for certain groups. It is especially significant for technologies that alleviate conditions that disproportionately affect those communities.

AdvaMed and its members have an important role to play in the effort to improve patient outcomes by improving access. Medical devices and diagnostic tests play a critical role in the prevention, detection, and treatment of many acute and chronic conditions. We are working collectively, with intentionality, to increase education and awareness of the societal benefits of ensuring access to medical devices by the patients who need them the most. We are seeking reforms that support the ultimate goal of ensuring all people have access to high quality healthcare. We are also seeking to improve how medical devices and technologies are designed, developed, researched, tested, and used in different populations. Today, as always, we remain committed to creating an environment that fosters appropriate access to healthcare and optimal outcomes for all.

Learn about AdvaMed's [work](#).

## References

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