

APACMed Position on Trade Barriers

We firmly believe patients should not become the unintended victims of trade disputes. Medical devices and diagnostic solutions are essential products that facilitate diagnosis, deliver lifesaving treatment, and promote patient quality of life. Tariffs on these vital technologies can significantly impact affordability, delay access to critical care, and place additional pressure on already overburdened healthcare systems. In some parts of Asia-Pacific, where healthcare infrastructure is still developing, such delays can have significant consequences, compromising the quality of care and, the well-being of millions of patients.

Imposition of tariffs also risk destabilising complex, interdependent global supply chains, many of which serve as lifelines for medical innovation and patient care across the region. Given the complex nature of medical devices and diagnostic solutions which are often necessarily manufactured with materials and components imported from multiple countries, trade barriers can be damaging to all parties. The Asia-Pacific medical device market is expected to grow to US\$225 billion by 2030 at a rate of 10.5% per annum¹, and disruptions could jeopardise the global competitiveness of MedTech ecosystems in Asia-Pacific, driving up costs and limiting growth and innovation.

With respect to existing and future trade barriers, given these risks, APACMed calls for policymakers to consider the critical nature of medical devices and diagnostic solutions and the importance of maintaining stable supply and access. We encourage all governments to engage in open, constructive dialogue to address this issue in a manner that supports healthcare objectives and avoids disruptions to patient care. The MedTech community is ready to work collaboratively with governments and international partners to ensure that trade policies support – not hinder – access to essential medical technologies.

1- <https://www.edb.gov.sg/en/our-industries/medical-technology.html>