

**The COVID-19 pandemic poses an unclear future with the potential for significant changes in the trade policy landscape.** New waves of policies, such as border restrictions, isolation and lockdown continue disrupting the flow of goods, and consequently, access to care for patients. Global demand for essential medical supplies and equipment to battle the pandemic continues to surge while governments are imposing export prohibitions and restrictions to mitigate critical shortages at the national level during this public health crisis.

As the global pandemic continues to evolve, more disruptions to global healthcare supply chain are expected. Healthcare companies must act now to reassess and improve current supply chain models to stay nimble and be ready to rebound in the post-COVID-19 era. There are a number of crucial approaches for businesses to consider during and after the COVID-19 pandemic:

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## 1. Navigating Current Disruptions to Global Supply Chain

Measures such as social distancing and travel restrictions are forcing firms to operate differently, from restructuring the workforce at manufacturing sites to changing import and export strategies of raw materials and finished products. There is a call for flexibility in safety mechanisms implemented by governments to avoid freezing the supply of healthcare products.

**APCO Worldwide can help organizations address both immediate disruptions to supply chain by:**

- Reviewing evolving policy and regulatory changes, and engaging with regulators in the market.
- Leveraging our network of experts in trade and market access across the globe to provide astute policy and business response.

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## 2. Mitigating Future Disruptions

Governments around the world are moving towards policies that aim to strengthen domestic production and supplies. According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), at least 80 countries have introduced temporary export prohibitions or restrictions:

- In March, President Trump invoked the Defense Production Act (DPA) to direct production of medical devices in the United States only for domestic use as PPE, masks and ventilators were in short supply. Leveraging the DPA, the White House ordered 3M to halt exporting surgical-grade face masks and ship masks produced overseas back to the United States.
- The Japanese Government has also started to urge domestic companies to shift production bases from China back to Japan.
- With 90 percent of active pharmaceutical ingredients for generic medicines being sourced from China and India, the European Union has warned of the bloc's heavy reliance for imports of crucial drugs during the COVID-19 crisis and is looking to address this issue.
- In a response to a surge in COVID-19 new cases, the government of Indonesia has temporarily banned exports of masks, sanitizers and medical equipment until June 30.

Future policy measures will demand further adjustments to global business operation and relocation of production processes across manufacturing sites, especially for companies which are tied to a single supplier. Global businesses are required to shift business models and commercial strategies, including market access and penetration as well as supply and distribution.

**APCO can help organizations understand, plan and adapt to this new world by:**

- ✓ Conducting stakeholder mapping to identify key regulators and their interrelationships in trade policies for healthcare sector.
- ✓ Providing briefings on trade policies and government decisions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Planning and simulating scenarios for the future.
- ✓ Building and implementing stakeholder coalitions to secure a seat at the table with key decision makers and have a voice on policies.
- ✓ Building advocacy to garner support on trade issues via opinion research, as well as media and public relations campaigns.