



Through Georgia Bio efforts, patient advocates and the biopharma industry are coming together to explore ways in which biopharma companies, patient advocacy organizations, and legislators can better partner to advance new treatments and cures. The first GA Bio Patient Advocacy Summit connected the patient advocacy community to showcase best practices and determine ways the life sciences companies can more fully incorporate the patient voice into the work they do—not just approaching regulatory applications or at commercialization, but throughout the drug development cycle. The COVID-19 pandemic has strengthened the advocates' voice while claiming our unique contributions.

The principles of the summit were to:

- Showcase effective ways the life sciences companies can amplify the patient voice into the work they do.
- Identify patient priorities and reflect patient concerns in the Georgia Bio legislative platform for 2021.
- Showcase Georgia Bio and its members as an ally for patient groups.
- Identify how industry can support advancing patient priorities such as access and affordability.
- Encourage greater involvement of advocates and industry at every stage of the continuum.
- Share what challenges the advocacy community is experiencing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Summit Summary

We focused on Health Equity and Access Barriers to help patient advocates realize the importance of collaboration and partnership with the bio industry and other stakeholders to uplift our communities. As long time advocates we have learned we can do more together! We heard speakers from bio industry, scientists to community advocates all working together to navigate access to treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic and adapt to the long-lasting changes it will make on our health care.

Important Summit Highlights

- ✚ We must address diversity in care and clinical trials but also cultural incompetency.
- ✚ A critical need to accelerate expansion of clinical trials to be more inclusive of underserved populations.
- ✚ Recruit more black doctors as principal investigators in clinical trials while promoting black and minority physicians as medical leaders.

- ✦ Be informed and prepared to fill the gap between an advocacy voice and creating critical policy solutions. Advocates can deliver a unifying message to calm and engage the public about changes to our healthcare and their role in securing best quality care. Working with the biopharma industry, policy makers and medical professionals, advocates can take their place in the leadership of a new healthcare delivery system that is inclusive, affordable and innovative.
- ✦ In our new COVID-19 environment, advocates are ready to engage more health advocacy organizations, patient advocates, universities and community leaders. We can use our outreach programs, social media platforms and webinars to inform, engage and empower others to participate in health care solutions that uplift our communities ensuring inclusive, affordable, effective access to treatments and services.
- ✦ The COVID-19 crisis presents an opportunity to work with many others who share our concerns for a better health care system. Patient Advocates can employ their relationship building skills to highlight our goals through the news media and other communications platforms that will help attract legislators and other policy influencers.

Georgia Bio Patient Advocacy Alliance

We are living in a pivotal moment in health care. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to live differently, work differently and care for ourselves and each other differently. As advocates, we have a historic opportunity for our voices to be heard in the biopharma industry. To conquer COVID-19 we are all forced to work together. Biopharma will produce many categories of vaccines to address all Americans from children to seniors to those who are immunologically suppressed. Patient Advocates will play a critical role in encouraging everyone to get vaccinated. We can dispel vaccination myths, alleviate fears and render accurate information to ensure the vaccines' safety and efficacy. But this will only happen if we partner with Biopharma so our voices will be heard.

Our first step is to develop the Georgia Bio Patients Advocacy Alliance bringing patients, advocate and medical organizations and bio professionals together to share strategies and actions that address important health policy issues. We look to recover from this COVID-19 crisis and establish best advocacy practices to confront future health threats. We aim to guarantee no one is left behind. Inclusive, affordable access to care and treatments is always at our core.

Through this partnership we can share our concerns and work together for legislative and community solutions. We are looking at the needs of patients today, through this COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Partnering with Georgia Bio will ensure patient voices are heard and that we establish a place at the table with industry, medical, policy and community stakeholders.

If you are interested in joining other patient advocates to ensure your voice of health concerns are heard then join the GA Bio Patient Advocacy Alliance. Please contact: dlg@arxc.org