

# Giving Voice to the Often Voiceless: Advocate-led Research Creating Change

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The pandemic continues to disrupt global healthcare systems, challenging people’s access to care, the development of new medicine and global advocacy initiatives. This crisis also illuminated racial and ethnic disparities in care that have persisted for far too long. In the face of these profound challenges, many advocates and healthcare providers gained a deeper understanding of the issues facing their communities. This session featured global experts who discussed the insights they’ve gained throughout the pandemic, and how they’re amplifying the voices of those who often go unheard.

## Featured Speakers



**Michelle Weese**

Executive Vice President,  
Corporate Affairs,  
Bristol Myers Squibb



**Alex Filicevas**

Executive Director,  
World Bladder Cancer  
Patient Coalition;  
President, All.Can  
International



**Yasmin Ibrahim**

Public Health Manager,  
Hepatitis B Foundation



**Roxana Mehran, MD, FACC,  
FACP, FAHA, FCCP, FESC, MSCAI**

Professor of Medicine in Cardiology  
and Population Health Science and  
Policy; Mount Sinai Professor in  
Cardiovascular Clinical Research and  
Outcomes; Director, The Center for  
Interventional Cardiovascular  
Research and Clinical Trials The Zena  
and Michael A. Wiener Cardiovascular  
Institute Icahn School of Medicine at  
Mount Sinai

## Key Points and Resources

- **Women healthcare providers continue to face issues of gender inequity across disciplines and subspecialties.** [Women as One](#) is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing gender inequalities in medicine by providing women physicians with unique professional opportunities.
  - [The CLIMB program](#) offers professional development opportunities to increase technical skillsets and increase visibility of women performing interventional procedures. The program also promotes more collaborative environments within catheterization laboratories and aims to nurture relationships among women in interventional cardiology and industry partners.
- **Raising disease awareness and being conscious of our implicit biases can be proactive methods to amplify voices that may go unheard by countering stigma and “removing the ask.”**
  - [This infographic](#) outlines 50 cognitive biases to be mindful of when working to support others.
- Patient and caregiver education is an important component of disease management. Disease education is also important as it can give patients and their family members or caregivers a **shared understanding and common language to talk about their illness, enhancing caregivers’ abilities to support their loved one’s emotional and psychological health.**
- **Advocates have a robust understanding of the patient experience.** Advocates can accelerate advances in patient care by quantifying information to highlight trends or gaps in care, identify priority issues, inform best practices and direct health policy recommendations.
  - The Global Cancer Coalitions Network’s report titled [“COVID-19: Impact on Cancer Patient Organisations Worldwide in 2020”](#) provides insight into the pandemic’s impact on cancer patient advocacy and the need for emergency resources to continue supporting patients and caregivers.