

**Abstract:**

To investigate factors contributing to health care equipment problems and associated technological investments in public hospitals. Design: The article reviews the processes of equipment planning, procurement and management. Analysis of results and observations from experts leads to recommendations and suggestions on good equipment management practices in public hospitals. It also provides recommendations for competitive utilisation of equipment in the public health sector. Settings: Health care equipment management in Kenya and South Africa in 1999/2000. Institutions: A total of 10 public equipment maintenance institutions, and 38 equipment maintenance experts participated in the survey. Majority of the participants were drawn from teaching hospitals. Results: It is evident that the way health technology is managed in health care institutions directly affects the quality of treatment patients receive. Although strategic importance of technology in health care has been documented widely in scientific literature; equipment planning, procurement and management have not received the attention they deserve in the transformation of health care services in the two countries under the survey. Conclusions: The growing demand for more and better health care greatly expands the role of health care equipment in the delivery of health services. Kenya and South Africa have tried various strategies to improve access, quality and cost-efficiency in the health care delivery systems. However it is clear that the optimal method has yet to be found.