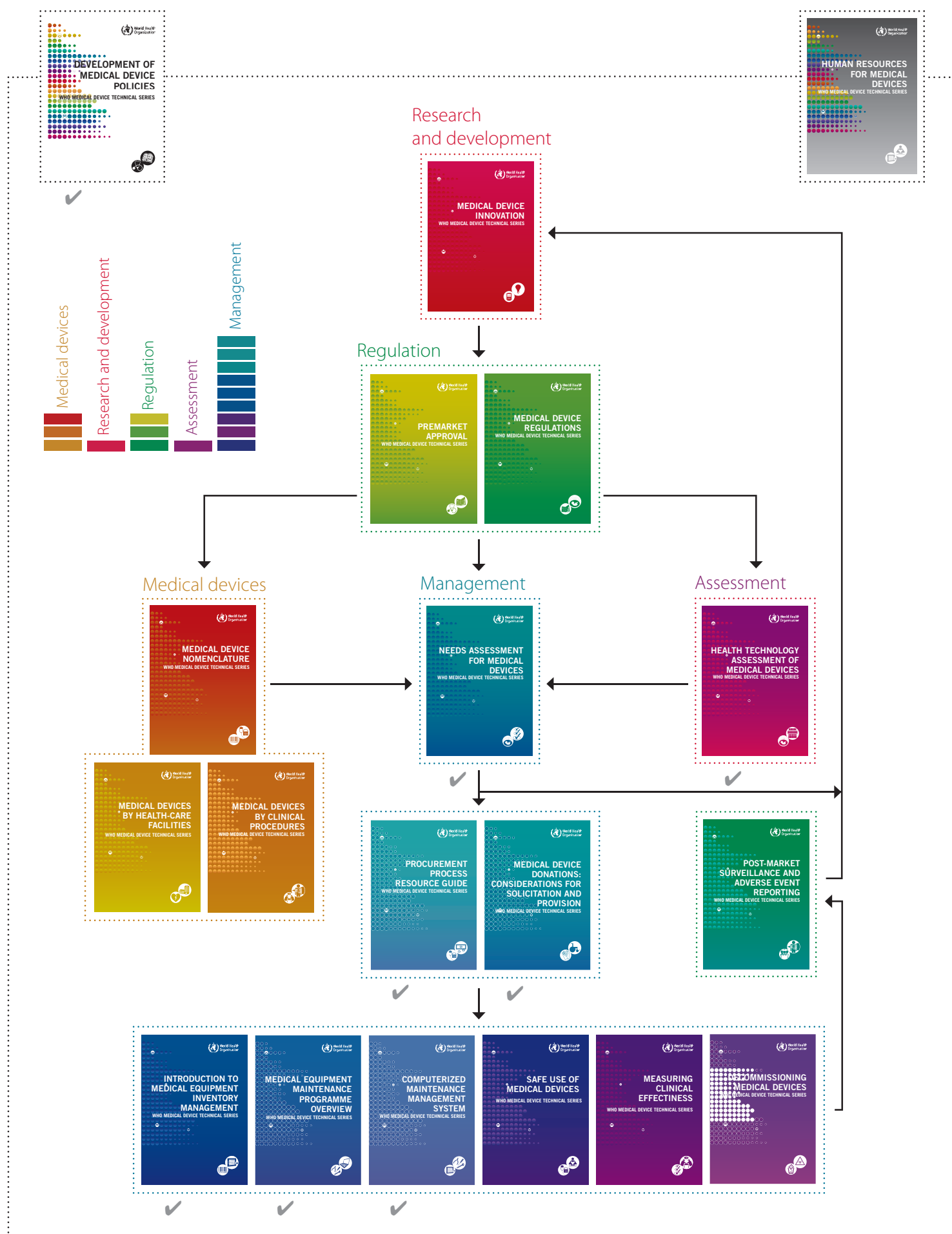


Medical equipment maintenance programme overview

WHO Medical device technical series





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Preface

Health technologies are essential for a functioning health system. Medical devices in particular are crucial in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of illness and disease, as well as patient rehabilitation. Recognizing this important role of health technologies, the World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA60.29 in May 2007. The resolution covers issues arising from the inappropriate deployment and use of health technologies, and the need to establish priorities in the selection and management of health technologies, specifically medical devices. By adopting this resolution, delegations from Member States acknowledged the importance of health technologies for achieving health-related development goals; urged expansion of expertise in the field of health technologies, in particular medical devices; and requested that the World Health Organization (WHO) take specific actions to support Member States.

One of WHO's strategic objectives is to "ensure improved access, quality and use of medical products and technologies." This objective, together with the World Health Assembly resolution, formed the basis for establishing the Global Initiative on Health Technologies (GIHT), with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. GIHT aims to make core health technologies available at an affordable price, particularly to communities in resource-limited settings, to effectively control important health problems. It has two specific objectives:

- to challenge the international community to establish a framework for the development of national essential health technology programmes that will have a positive impact on the burden of disease and ensure effective use of resources;
- to challenge the business and scientific communities to identify and adapt innovative technologies that can have a significant impact on public health.

To meet these objectives, WHO and partners have been working towards devising an agenda, an action plan, tools and guidelines to increase access to appropriate medical devices. This document is part of a series of reference documents being developed for use at the country level. The series will include the following subject areas:

- policy framework for health technology
- medical device regulations
- health technology assessment

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