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Effects of Paucity of Medical Equipment Maintenance Manpower: a Case Study of the Health Care Delivery Systems, South-Eastern Nigeria

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Maintenance entails all activities carried out on equipment in terms of proper installation, good servicing, routine checks, repairs and replacement of faulty parts in order for such equipment to give off its best throughout its useful life. Every item has its own operational characteristics which it must possess or exhibit in the course of its use. A termination in the characteristics under working condition is considered as fault and this may be due to lack of proper maintenance. Medical equipment are designed in the diagnosis, monitoring or treatment of medical conditions. The aim of this study is to identify the reasons for the paucity of medical equipment maintenance manpower in the South-Eastern Nigeria. A total of one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were sampled amongst some cadres of health workers in 15 health facilities and diagnostic centres in the selected states of the South Eastern States. 61% of the respondents were males while 39% were females, 40.7% were doctors, 23.3% were biomedical engineers/technicians while 35% were medical laboratory scientists. The study showed succinctly that there are really few equipment maintenance manpower in the health facilities and medical laboratory centers of the south-eastern Nigeria as 17.3% nurses on short course training, 20.6% electrical engineers service and maintain the available medical equipment as against 35.3% biomedical engineers/technicians as the study revealed. The study showed that there are very few equipment maintenance manpower due to myriads of reasons which include lack of effective training/re-training of young personnels, influx of obsolete equipment by donor agencies, difficulty in getting or sourcing for spare parts, no support from the government, maintenance manual written in foreign languages, poor practical contents in BMET curricula, technological complexity of modern equipment, no good motivation, no proper enlightenment campaigns etc. Thus, the solutions given by respondents should be upheld with all sense of responsibility for the betterment of BMET in Nigeria.