

MDS-3



Managing Access to Medicines and Health Technologies



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Preface

It is my great pleasure to present *MDS-3: Managing Access to Medicines and Health Technologies*. In the thirty years since the original publication of *Managing Drug Supply*, the world has experienced remarkable changes as the global health context has evolved. Think, for example, about the profound impact that HIV/AIDS alone has had. Advances in science and medicine, donor funding for vast global health initiatives, the advent of innovative information technologies, and a greater focus on building strong health systems have fundamentally affected our work. What has not changed over the years is MSH's commitment to identifying problems in access to and use of medicines and designing and implementing relevant, effective responses. We hope that *MDS-3* will be a valuable tool in the effort to ensure universal access to quality medicines and health technologies and their appropriate use.

The new and updated information in *MDS-3* reflects the dramatic changes in the public health landscape. Nearly 100 experts from a wide range of disciplines and virtually every corner of the world have contributed to this third edition. In addition to new country studies, references, and extensive revisions, *MDS-3* offers new chapters on areas such as pharmaceutical benefits in insurance programs, pricing, intellectual property, drug seller initiatives, and traditional and complementary medicine. The revisions and new chapters echo the wide variety of issues that are important to health practitioners and policy makers today. Even the book's new title depicts the need to broaden our focus from medicines to include *health technologies*, such as test kits and laboratory supplies, and to embrace the concept of *access*. Too often people assume that if medicines and technologies are available, positive health outcomes will naturally result. Access, however, encompasses not only product availability, but also the need to provide medicines and pharmaceutical services that are safe, efficacious, cost-effective, and high quality. Equally important are affordability and acceptability, including cultural and personal preferences.

We hope that *MDS-3* will be used widely by those with an interest in improving access to medicines and health technologies. To make the book accessible to as many users as possible, we are making the content available in several formats. The easiest way to access *MDS-3* is online at <http://www.mds-online.org>. The entire book can be searched online, and individual chapters can be downloaded. *MDS-3* is also available directly from MSH on flash drive or CD-ROM for those without reliable Internet access or who prefer these media. We are working on an arrangement to make print copies available as well.

As users of *MDS-3*, you are vital to ensuring that it remains a valuable and dynamic resource. Your suggestions for enriching and updating the information and improving its presentation are greatly welcome. We will update individual chapters as needed to provide new material in a timely manner. Please send suggestions to us at mds@msh.org.

We acknowledge with great appreciation all the authors, reviewers, and others whose efforts are reflected in *MDS-3*. Any contribution that *MDS-3* makes is a direct result of their knowledge, experience, and deep dedication—and of the hard work of those around the world who each day strive to help their countries and their programs realize the full health impact of ensuring access to medicines and health technologies for all.

Jonathan D. Quick, MD, MPH
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February 2012

How to Use *MDS-3*

MDS-3: Managing Access to Medicines and Health Technologies may seem intimidating, but you do not need to read it from cover to cover. To ease accessibility, we have organized its content to present a sequential overview of major topics and then within each section to provide more detailed explanations of fundamental concepts, definitions of basic terms, and practical ideas for designing and implementing effective changes in pharmaceutical management systems.

The following features make the material accessible to readers looking for information in specific areas.

Overview chapters. Starting with Part II, Pharmaceutical Management, overview chapters introduce each element in the pharmaceutical management framework: selection (Chapter 16), procurement (Chapter 18), distribution (Chapter 22), use (Chapter 27), and management (Chapter 37). These overview chapters provide background information that lays the foundation for more detailed discussions of specific topics in the chapters that follow them.

Chapter summaries. Each chapter begins with a summary of its contents. Readers who are interested in a brief overview of an area or of all aspects of managing access to medicines can read the relevant summaries.

Country studies. Reports of experiences in various countries illustrate points in the text. Although conditions in some countries may have changed since these country studies were written, they provide useful examples of the ways in which the pharmaceutical management process can operate, and in some cases, how it should not operate.

Boxes. Boxes are used to make information, such as the steps of a process, easy to locate and use. In addition, some boxes contain general experiences or descriptions of relevant initiatives or resources.

Glossaries. Glossaries are included for the chapters on intellectual property (Chapter 3), insurance (Chapter 12), selection (Chapter 16), procurement (Chapter 18), distribution (Chapter 22), use (Chapter 27), management (Chapter 37), analyzing expenditures (Chapter 40), financial management (Chapter 41), storage facilities (Chapter 42), and computers (Chapter 51).

References and further readings. Each chapter contains a list of references cited in the text or that relate to topics the chapter covers. Particularly useful references are indicated by a star.

Chapter annexes. Annexes provide sources of additional information and samples of pharmaceutical management forms currently in use in various parts of the world.