

# MEDLINE FILE PLANS FOR 1978

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In November or early December, the 1978 MEDLINE file will replace the 1977 file for on-line service. NLM has determined that there is a restriction on the total file from which it can provide service as described in my article in the July 1977 issue of the Technical Bulletin. After a review of all the alternatives NLM has decided on specific actions to limit the size of the on-line file to avoid a recurrence of this problem next year. Thus, for at least the coming year, we will restrict the size of the MEDLINE file to fit the space available through the following actions:

- (1) Delete the four elements from the file: reprint source, place of publication, record source, and priority. These elements will be retained in SDILINE.
- (2) Continue to drop abstracts of over 200 words except for long articles (over 10 pages) with informative abstracts. Abstracts previously deleted from the August–December 1977 MEDLINE file will be added to the 1978 MEDLINE file.
- (3) Drop all articles, including reviews, published in 1975 or earlier. This would make the inclusion criterion compatible with TOXLINE and insure that the on-line file contains only current material.
- (4) The material in the present file with publication dates of 1975 or earlier will become BACK75. This file will contain the abstracts for the 1975 material but will also be missing the four elements enumerated above.

The net result of these actions will be a smaller on-line file of about 380,000 citations growing to 630,000 citations by the end of next year. However, the on-line file will be able to contain all of the most recent publications without any danger of file overflow. Elements such as reprint source will be available in SDILINE and will be available in printouts of SDI searches. This has been the principal place where this information has been requested. We have no information whether IBM can modify this file limit nor any implementation date.