

# Appendix K.—Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Glossary

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAMC	Association of American Medical Colleges
AGRICOLA	Agricultural On-Line Access (NAL)
AIM-TWX	Abridged Index Medicus via the Teletypewriter Exchange Network
AMA	American Medical Association
APHA	American Public Health Association
BCN	Biomedical Communications Network
BRS	Bibliographic Retrieval Services
CAS	Chemical Abstracts Service
<i>CIJE</i>	<i>Current Index to Journals in Education</i>
<i>CIM</i>	<i>Cumulated Index Medicus</i>
CITE	Current Information Transfer in English
COSATI	Committee on Scientific and Technical Information
DHEW	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (now DHHS)
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DIALOG*	DIALOG Information Services, Inc.
ERIC	Educational Resources Information Center (NIE)
<i>FAMLI</i>	<i>Family Medicine Literature Index</i>
GAO	General Accounting Office (U.S. Congress)
GPO	Government Printing Office
HEW	see DHEW
HHS	see DHHS
IRL	Information Retrieval, Ltd.
ISDN	integrated services digital network
ISI	Institute for Scientific Information
MEDLARS	Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System
MEDLINE	MEDLARS On-Line
MeSH	medical subject headings
MLAA	Medical Library Assistance Act
NAL	National Agricultural Library (USDA)
NAS	National Academy of Sciences
NCLIS	National Commission on Libraries and Information Science
NHPIC	National Health Planning Information Center
NIE	National Institute of Education (Department of Education)
NIH	National Institutes of Health (DHHS)
NLM	National Library of Medicine (NIH)

● This is not only the short name of the organization specified but is also the name of a data base.

NMAC	National Medical Audiovisual Center (NLM)
NTIS*	National Technical Information Service (Department of Commerce)
OECD	Organization for Economic Corporation and Development
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OTA	Office of Technology Assessment (U.S. Congress)
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
RIE	Research in Education
RML	Regional Medical Library
RMLP	Regional Medical Library Program
SATCOM	Scientific and Technical Communication
SDC	System Development Corp.
SDI	selective dissemination of information
SUNY	State University of New York
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
WHO	World Health Organization

## Glossary

**Batch searching:** A method of information processing whereby data are read into a computer from key-punched cards. The desired program, usually stored on magnetic tape, is entered from the tape into the computer memory. The program acts on the data, and the results are made available on a printer or a second set of keypunch cards. Unlike on-line searching, the batch method does not allow the user to interact directly with the computer to change commands while the search is being done.

**Boolean logic:** A system for expressing relationships between concepts using the connective “and,” “or,” and “not.” Many information retrieval systems use Boolean logic as a method of searching data bases.

**Cataloging:** The process of describing and classifying books or other library materials.

**Data base:** An organized collection of information, usually on a specific subject, in machine-readable form and accessible by computer.

**Distribution computer system:** An arrangement of computers in which the computer complex has many separate computing facilities all working in a cooperative manner, rather than a single computer in a single location. The system is versatile, and small computers in geographically dispersed locations can be used for simple tasks in conjunction with a powerful large computer that is used for larger tasks.

**End users:** Individuals, such as physicians and researchers, who request and use on-line search results.

**Indexing:** The process of assigning headings (from a specialized thesaurus) to articles that have been analyzed. The key words assigned are then used in the retrieval process to identify the relevant citations in a bibliographic search.

**Intermediate users:** Librarians and other information specialists trained to conduct on-line searches of computerized data bases.

**MEDLARS:** NLM's computerized retrieval and technical processing system, a complex IBM multi-processing system that maintains data files, provides on-line retrieval services, and produces computer photocomposed publications. The current system is often referred to as MEDLARS II; the system under development is MEDLARS III

**MEDLINE:** The original, largest and most utilized MEDLARS data base. MEDLINE contains references to biomedical and other literature relevant to health and health services.

**Natural language:** Standard English.

**On-line:** A computer program is considered to be "on-line" if it can respond to commands while the information specialist is working with the program at the computer terminal. "On-line" capability allows for near-instantaneous response, and thus allows the user to interact with the computer.

**Periodical:** A publication, such as a journal, which is issued at fixed intervals usually longer than a day between issues or numbers.

**Precision ratio:** The number of relevant items retrieved in a bibliographic search divided by the total number retrieved in the search.

**Recall ratio:** The number of relevant items retrieved in a bibliographic search divided by the number of relevant items indexed by the system.

**Regional Medical Library:** A library that provides document delivery services and assistance in organizing collections to smaller hospital and medical school libraries in a given geographic region under a contract awarded by NLM. Currently, the United States is divided into 11 regions, but NLM plans to reorganize the Regional Medical Library Program into 7 by fall 1982.

**Serial:** A publication issued as one of a consecutively numbered and indefinitely continued series. It may be a periodical or a publication, such as a monograph or conference proceeding, that is issued at irregular intervals.

**Terminal:** A machine similar to a typewriter which is capable of transmitting and receiving electronic signals to/from a computer.

**Text word searching:** The process of searching a data base using words that appear in the title, abstract, or text of the article cited. Text word searching does not require that an article be indexed using terms from a subject heading list, i.e., a controlled vocabulary.

**Two-tiered searching:** The process of searching a data base using both a controlled vocabulary (used for indexing articles) and words appearing in the title or abstract or the text of the article cited.