

## **Managing change for Library staff and users at the PHLS Central Library**

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The PHLS Central Library has a staff of 9, and serves microbiologists on site and at some 50 other locations in England and Wales. IT availability and expertise are varied - some sites have sophisticated users and good networks, others have novice users with limited access to computers.

For 50 years the Library has produced a weekly current awareness bulletin from its own database. 400 copies per week were distributed by post or e-mail, each with c350 journal references. The availability of electronic services, the growth in the microbiological literature and the shortage of professional library staff to scan and index papers made the continued production of a comprehensive service untenable. Plans were made to reduce the bulletin to a quarter of its former size from 2002.

The poster will show how the change was managed. It will look at staffing issues, implementation of new working patterns, service promotion, delivery, and education issues. An unexpected result was the feedback from subscribers.

Post script: In January 2002 the Department of Health announced that the PHLS will merge with two other organisations in April 2003 to form a new agency. Major factors, eg the number and location of laboratories, are still being negotiated. Change management will be a major issue for all three libraries, which have little overlap of stock, varied retention policies, and different management software.

As a first step, a paper has been submitted to management with a robust justification for retaining the three site libraries. Future plans will cover cooperative purchasing (eg Science Direct) and developing strategies for joint action.