

Ontario Library Service Informal Library Chat

Summary Notes

December 16, 2021 – 2 pm ET (1 pm CT)

OLS Updates

- Reminder the OLS offices will be closed from Dec.25-Jan.3. During this period, JASI support (jasisupport@olservice.ca) will be available on Wednesday Dec. 29th, Thursday Dec. 30th and until noon on Friday Dec. 31st.
- For those who requested December invoicing, invoices for 2022 services such as OverDrive Provincial Consortium and the Provincial Licensing program are going out just now. These will come to the library via e-mail with attachment from OLS staff
- Postage reimbursement for VDX transactions will go out in January 2022. At the end of December, OLS staff will calculate how many VDX items were lent in the year; determine a “per item” reimbursement rate (based on the amount of money in this reimbursement program) and calculate how many items were lent by which libraries to prepare the reimbursement cheques.

COVID Snapshot of library services

Those in attendance were polled on a variety of current service levels for their libraries. See COVID-19 Snapshot of Library Services [document](#) for this week’s results (as well as results from the past 5 chats).

Discussion topics

Rapid Antigen Tests

- Much confusion about the provincial announcement regarding the availability of Rapid Antigen Tests and mention of public libraries as a location. The website with a list of locations is at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/pop-up-holiday-schedule-rapid-antigen-tests>
- **New from CEO list, posted at 9 pm:** *“Staff at MHSTCI have provided the following clarification regarding the distribution of rapid tests at public library locations. The Ministry of Health has clarified that broad distribution of rapid tests through all public library locations is not planned. As of this afternoon only two library systems in select higher risk areas are included in the pop up rapid test distribution plans – Peterborough Public Library and Ottawa Public Library. Distribution at these locations is not slated to begin until the New Year.”*

Winter programming – (Initially this question was about whether people were offering, or planning on offering in-person programming, but with the new statistics, what are people thinking now?)

- Several libraries are not planning any in-person programming
- One is planning in-person programs at the community centre so there is a larger space
- Several offering small adult programming – book club, adult crafts with a limit of 10 guests and proof of vaccination required but then story times are offered but no POV required.

Holiday Closures (or closures intended to stop the spread of the virus)

- Several libraries reported closing between Christmas and New Year as often not enough people to warrant staying open
- Another noted no evening hours between Christmas and New Year.
- One noted that as part-time staff are assigned to this period, since they close from Dec.24-Jan.2., the time is unpaid and calculation of stat hours is all that occurs.

Time Limits in the Library

- The topic of time limits was presented in thinking about the library's service to vulnerable population -and offering a space for them to perhaps spend some of the day
- Check the poll results for this but 21 of 29 respondents to the poll have no time limits within the library; 5 have 30-to-60-minute limits and 2 have 15-30 minutes.
- One noted that "time limits are 30 minutes at a time up to 90 minutes if nobody is waiting. The purpose is to maintain capacity limits."

Impact of service to the public on the library/library staff

- Interesting discussion about the role of library (beyond the time limit) covering such topics as:
 - o It is a public service job serving the public – but staff have a fear of doing in-person work vs leaving it at curbside
 - o Are libraries really meant to be social service organizations
 - o To do public service well, might look to the Disney corporation and their training of public service staff (eg. take on a certain persona to serve the public)
 - o Some push-back from staff – but is this push-back safety or a perception about who should be coming into the library

AND on the topic of "best thing this week":

- Alicia Subnaik Kilgour/Niagara Falls noted that she starts all our Management Meeting with "sparks of joy" everyone has to try to find one thing positive to share before we start library business. Great way to reset our minds and focus on positives
- Jennifer LaChappelle was elected as the Mid-Central Representative for OPLA (Ontario Public Library Association)
- Pamela Kelly is now the CEO of the Markstay-Warren Public Library with the retirement of the CEO Cindy Robidas.
- Susan Artymko who was Interim CEO of the Bonnechere Union Library is now the CEO as Nikolina Likarevic has moved from the area.
- Hanover had their budget approved – with a few questions and comments including one about a doubling of donations.
- Ryan Dowd has free one hour webinar on burnout Friday - running at several timeslots and open to anyone. This Friday, we're going to show the recording for FREE. Click here to sign up: <https://bit.ly/BurnoutStressFreeTraining> (if the link doesn't work, type it in your browser)

The next Informal Library Chat is scheduled for Thursday, January 6, 2021, 2 pm ET (8 am CT).
Connection details will be provided via the "All Ontario CEO listserv".