

Ontario Library Service Informal Library Chat

Summary Notes

March 3, 2022 – 2 pm ET (1 pm CT)

OLS Updates

- The Annual Survey of Public Libraries launched on January 26th and has a deadline of April 30th. The OLS has a webpage for the Annual Survey - <https://www.olservice.ca/funding-grants/annual-survey>. On that page, you will find the updated FAQ (carried over from last year) AND the holding information for the OverDrive provincial consortium and e-resources that you need for Section C. Three OLS staff have been assigned to the Peggy, Alexandra and Nancy – contact any of us to ask your question.
- Training webinars continue with one more webinar left in the Winter 2022 season - Roll for Initiative: Attracting Users to Programming Using Games (Wednesday March 8th, 10 am). Information on webinars will be included in the next Training Bulletin due in April and posted on LearnHQ.
- Libraries serving resident populations under 20,000 may apply for grants through the Ontario Trillium Foundation's [Resilient Communities grant](#). Applications open on March 9th and the deadline is April 6th.

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

Education grants

- Staff interested in a Library Techniques program – and asked about education grants. No one could identify a specific grant at this time (like the old \$15 million education grant)
- Libraries were reminded that the EXCEL program – a program of the Ontario Library Service – offers training in running/managing a public library in Ontario. More information is posted at <https://www.olservice.ca/consulting-training/excel>. This program is well-recognized in the Ontario library community with more than 800 people having completed the program.

Physical distancing

- Ontario Regulation 364/20 was amended to include this clause: “2) *The person responsible for a business or organization that is open shall operate the business or organization in compliance with any advice, recommendations and instructions issued by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, including any advice, recommendations and instructions, (a) on physical distancing, cleaning or disinfecting;*”. This line is vague. OLS staff checked that there are only 2 references to physical distancing in amended OReg, neither of which apply to 2m situation), so referenced but nothing specific is posted in regulation. We also noted that there are also **no specific rules** around cleaning and disinfecting (also referenced in this amended Regulations)

From the chat:

- Carleton Place- I received the same information from our local health unit (Leeds/Lanark). No more social distancing mandate.
- New Tecumseh - social distancing limits capacity so no capacity limits = no social distancing... people will still be keeping apart it's just not mandated anymore
- Huntsville - SMDHU chief Med officer in guidance docs has referenced social distancing in other situations (ie. public washrooms and warming centres) as well as cleaning/disinfecting.

Naxolone kits – From Leeds – “Did anyone see the news regarding mandatory naloxone kits in high risk workplaces (examples provided were bars, nightclubs, and construction sites) that are included in the Working For Workers Act 2022 that was introduced in the legislature earlier this week?”

- By show of hands only 7 (of 49) participants have kits-
- New Tecumseth - We just got nasal and injection kits for each of our branches, and provided staff with online training (we'll definitely be preferring the nasal spray one). This is because in Alliston we have a SHIFT program for homelessness and they provided the nasal spray kits to us.
- St. Mary's – have kits, but noted it might take 6 or 7 applications; told to call 911 and start application. Noted that kits have short shelf life
- Cobourg- Police station is a block away & would prefer that this not be mandated
- Whitestone - fire dept recommended library not carry them, but go next door at fire station
- Bonnechere – even if have kits, a person can choose to do First Aid (or not)
- Dryden – have included kits in sticks/needles policy as a hazard in the workplace.
- **From OLS** - *Online Resource... "Reducing Harms - Recognizing and Responding to Opioid Overdoses in Your Organization - Canadian Mental Health Association Ontario, June 2018":*
<https://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CMHA-Ontario-Reducing-Harms-Updated.pdf>

Board documents – “Who do most libraries have signing the minutes of meetings?”

- Espanola - Chair and secretary sign after approval

March Break Programs

- Huntsville- No policy change. Doing in person and virtual during march break.
- Madoc - doing a small drop in craft program for kids over the week. We will have Take-and-Make kits available for those who would prefer to take it home.
- Marathon -aiming for more programming by the end of the month and a small drop in during March break.
- Cobourg - staying virtual for March Break and doing some self-directed programs in-house. Probably begin in-person programs for April.
- Eganville - are a small library, so it's all in person.
- Champlain - sticking to take and make kits for March break. Hoping to open our doors March 14 and maybe have in person programming in March. Baby steps!
- Atikokan- are just having craft and science pick ups. And a photo scavenger hunt in Atikokan
- Whitestone - moved to in-person for March Break but are keeping all of the activities in the community centre to allow for distancing. We're doing family-style activity tables that families can stay within their bubble.
- Espanola - Book sale for March break / new creative writing program begins this month
- Carleton Place - self-directed programs for March break, some in-person programs begin in April
- Grand Valley - hoping for in-person programming for March Break
- Huron County - Virtual for now (children's author, magic, take and makes) but know the public will expect in-person programming soon so are looking at later March
- New Tecumseth - doing some in-person programming for March Break! Some groups want to remain virtual but others are happy to be back.

Renting meeting rooms

- Informal survey 11 of the 49 are allowing rent/use of library meeting rooms (some libraries do not have meeting rooms). Several noted that the meeting rooms have been used for storage space and will require some work to clear them out.

- Cobourg - began renting our meeting room last week.
- Centre Hastings - are allowing groups who normally use the meeting space to use it for now - Seniors Group, etc., but have not opened it to the general public yet.
- Whitestone & Muskoka - only our study rooms.
- Deep River - Anyone can rent, but there are changing guidelines depending on COVID protocols.

Volunteers

- Informal survey – 14 of the 49 libraries are allowing volunteers, with most noting that they must follow same policies/procedures as staff including vaccination (Carleton Place, Espanola, Cavan).
- Cobourg - also invited our volunteers back into the library too.
- Champlain - looking to get our volunteers back mid- March
- Muskoka Lakes -No volunteers yet.

Staff vaccination

- Of those in the Poll – 23 have vaccination policies and 16 reported that they do not have policy
- Orillia have vaccination policy, but may recommend that the policy be dropped as it doesn't seem consistent with other health options.
- Carleton Place - follows our Town, and there has been no discussion on dropping it
- SDG Library -Our vacc policy is tied in with our municipality's
- Marathon - have to follow the town so no discussion from the board
- Champlain - will follow the municipality. If they drop the policy we will probably follow suit.
- New Tecumseth - our policy states that new hires would be required but that stipulation would only remain in effect as long as the passport mandates were in effect. Once those were gone, by my understanding due to medical professionals stating it no longer makes enough of a difference to have one in place, we would stop requiring it.

Mask mandate (once no longer required by regulation/Chief Medical Officer)

- St. Mary's – if masks requirements are dropped, may just offer options to staff on wearing masks (or not)
- Leeds - I think that when the mask mandate is lifted we will no longer require them, although I suspect several of our staff members will want to continue wearing them, and we will continue to provide them for staff for the foreseeable future. I think that trying to maintain it once the provide drops the mandate could create more significant issues with patrons, so we will probably move to optional once the provincial mandate drops.
- New Tecumseth - Our initial plan is that once it's gone, it will be a choice for staff/patrons to keep wearing them, not a requirement.
- Bonnechere - I also think it should be a choice if someone wants to wear a mask or not, once mandate is lifted.

Plexiglass barriers (in future)

- Will add this question to the poll. Some noticed that the barriers can not be easily removed.

<p>The next Informal Library Chat is scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2022, 10 am ET (9 am CT). Connection details will be provided via the "All Ontario CEO listserv" the Monday before</p>
