

A microscopic view of several COVID-19 virus particles. The particles are spherical and covered in red, triangular-shaped spikes. They are set against a blurred background of pink and purple hues, suggesting a cellular or tissue environment.

Pandemic sharing: how COVID-19 helped us demonstrate the value of collaboration

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NEOS Miniconference, June 4, 2021

March 2020! Pandemic panic!

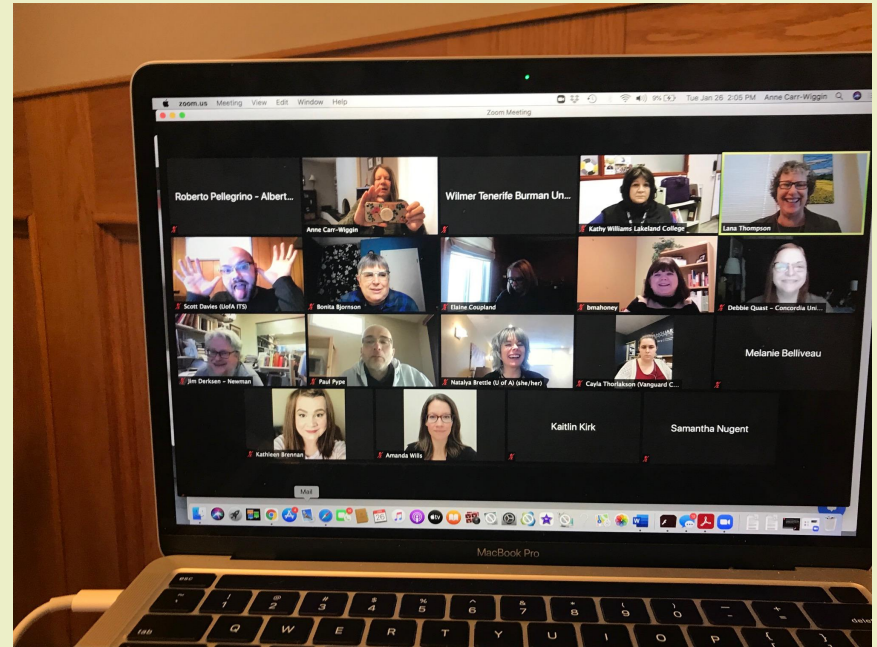
Sudden closure of libraries and move to online services

Most staff working from home

NEOS Connect closed

No access to physical resources

The committee gathered on Zoom!



How to help our own students?

Curbside or Library Take Out services

Extend due dates

New attitude towards overdue fees. Led to cancellation of fees on all main collection items for secondary clients

Focus on reducing stress for clients by extending renewals, cancelling fees, even forgiving loss of items in some cases.

SymphonyWeb

How to help students not living close to their institutions?

Most libraries globally could only provide access to physical materials for their own students.

The ability of a few libraries (MacEwan, Vanguard, King's, Burman, Newman, Red Deer, Keyano, Lakeland) to allow limited access to students was the key.

We built on each others' capacity - physical access, capacity to communicate with students and set up profiles

Creation of NEOS-PS profile to enable identification of these clients to enable their ability to place holds & checkout material as a distinct group

Changing scenarios of opening and closing

March 2020 - All NEOS libraries & NEOS Connect close

June - August 2020 - Curbside pick up at some NEOS libraries for primary clients

August/September 2020 - NEOS Connect restarts. Most libraries open to primary clients and a few libraries open to secondary clients, “stranded” students and External clients

December 2020 - Many NEOS libraries & NEOS Connect close

February 2021 - NEOS Connect restarts and curbside available at most NEOS libraries with some reopening

May 2021 - NEOS Connect cannot send UAL main collection items; another series of library closures with some returning to curbside services

Under the hood – creative ILS changes & customizations

Stopping (seemingly) everything! Notices, processes, and holds

Restarting... or starting anew?

Vanguard College controlled lending setup launched May 26

- Make system select items to fill holds when library closed
- Restrict circulation to Vanguard items and their primary clients
- Custom pickup notices

U of A (June 22), NorQuest (July 9), MacEwan (July 11), AGL (Aug 5), Concordia (Aug 18), GPRC (Aug 25)

Varied service models (bookings, checkout on arrival, checkout & mailout, self-serve)

Under the hood – creative ILS changes & customizations

Fall 2020 - same old, same old?

- Sharing materials again
- Libraries open as the rule, not the exception
- Notices, recalls, lost item billing

Or not so much?

- No overdue fees for secondaries - rewriting circ rules and cancelling from earlier
- Email users their barcode instead of physical card (NLC, RDC, NorQuest, Concordia)
- Place Hold function with limited pickup locations
- 1-day loan textbook collection for MacEwan instead of reserves
- New borrower category - NEOS-PS

Under the hood – creative ILS changes & customizations

Moving due dates with increasing finesse

Enabling holds shelf maintenance at some libraries and not others

Pausing and resuming when appropriate:

- Lost notices/billing
- NEOS-PS borrowing

Easing back into bills notices with a targeted approach

NEOS status dashboard

Tool for service planning and information sharing

Focused on key pieces of operational information

Book returns, hold pickup, hold processing, shipping, access to stacks and space

Branch	Book return open to	Hold Pickup For	List Onshelf Holds processed on	Shipping via NEOS Connect	Stacks open to	Space open to	Notes
Grande Prairie Regional College - Grande Prairie Updated: 2021-04-14 09:30:53	Primary	Primary by appt only	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	N/A	N/A	Space not physically open. Book requests open to our primary users and NEOS
Grande Prairie Regional College - Fairview Updated: 2021-05-11 10:25:05	Closed	Primary by appt only			N/A	N/A	No staff available
Keyano College Updated: 2021-05-12 14:29:11	Primary, Secondary and Public	Primary Secondary NEOS-PS	Monday Friday	Monday Friday	N/A	N/A	Holds will be picked up from the Security desk at the Clearwater Campus
The King's University Updated: 2021-05-28 11:16:27	Primary, Secondary and Public	Primary by appt only Secondary by appt only NEOS-PS by appt only	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	Wednesday	N/A	N/A	Hold pick up by email request at campus main reception during building hours 7 days/week.
Lakeland College - Lloydminster Updated: 2021-05-05 10:27:26	Primary, secondary, and NEOS-PS	Primary Secondary	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	Primary Secondary	Primary Secondary	Open to Primary & Secondary Not open to NEOS-PS
Lakeland College - Vermilion Updated: 2021-05-05 10:26:26	Primary	Primary	Tuesday Thursday	Tuesday Thursday	Primary	Primary	

Thanks, Jeremy!

Pandemic wins!

More equal voice and more connection via video meetings

Elimination of Secondary overdue fees

Introduction of SymphonyWeb web client

Willingness to share, stretch, and collaborate

Positive attitude of collaboration and creative problem-solving

Positioned libraries as reliable, responsive services in an uncertain time



Consortial value

Strategic importance, demonstrating value to institutions/funders

Resource sharing identified as a valuable benefit of NEOS membership

Access to collections valuable to clients

Good client relations - pausing/eliminating overdue fees, returns, recalls

Demonstrating value and cost-avoidance in a time of provincial post-secondary cuts

Addressing issues - HathiTrust Emergency Temporary Access Service was a barrier to access for libraries other than UAL

Sharing latest information - on quarantining physical items, enhanced online access from publishers etc.

Pushing the boundaries of what's possible - strong will to collaborate for the most benefit to clients and library staff



References

by Emily Burdek, 2021 graduate of Library & Information Technology Program

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Thank you! We might have time for a few questions!

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Image credits

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CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/dpk/diseases-and-conditions/coronaviruses/images/outbreak-coronavirus-world-1024x506px.jpg>