Resource Sharing During the Time of COVID:

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BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic created many challenges to providing library services but library staffs have prevailed. The Resource Sharing Department of the Health Sciences and Human Services Library serves the schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Social Work and the Graduate School of the University of Maryland Baltimore. Throughout the pandemic, we met the challenges and continued to deliver ILL service largely uninterrupted.

CHALLENGES –and– Solutions

LOCKDOWN
March 14, 2020
August 31, 2020

Challenges:
- Lost access to print collections due to building closure
- Content sharing pool shrank as libraries locked down around the nation and world
- Staffing reduced from 4 ½ to 2 FT while continuing the service
- Request volume increased due to campus research projects including systematic reviews
- Projects/tasks in addition to ILL operation, e.g. Docline EFTS transition, institutional repository and data management work
- Maintaining connection with staff in a virtual environment
- Professional development activities no longer in-person
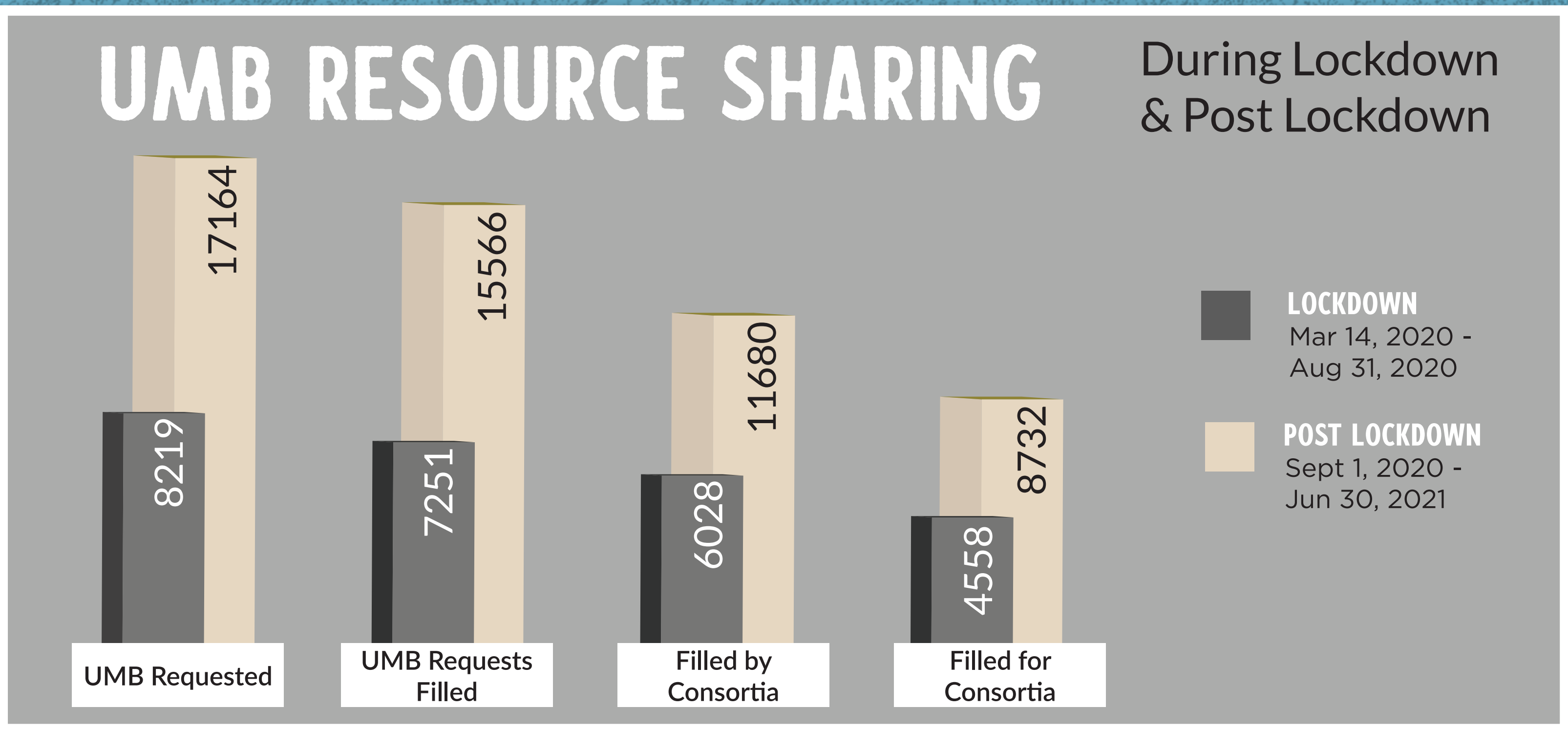
Solutions:
- Provided ILL service remotely with OA content and e-collections
- Sought assistance from ILL consortia to fulfill document delivery requests
- Suspended book loan service
- Prioritized work – Requests with a longer deadline to be filled after reopen
- Joined ILL communities' efforts to combat pandemic challenges
    - RapidILL COVID-19 initiative – provided resources to non-Rapid members
    - Waived fees to first time Docline and OCLC users who were not able to pay
- De-stressed with colleagues – virtual happy hours, birthday parties and fun activities
- Continued professional development by attending virtual conferences and webinars

LIBRARY BUILDING PARTIAL REOPENING
September 1, 2020
June 30, 2021

Challenges:
- Covid-19 safety concerns
- A hybrid operational model – some staff return onsite, others remained teleworking
- Onsite staff unfamiliar with online communication tools
- Outdated ILL software and broken equipment
- Process changes, e.g., quarantine materials
- Virtual training new staff member

Solutions:
- Stationed onsite staff in closed-door offices to work unmasked
- Provided cleaning supplies and gloves
- Installed refrigerator and microwave for staff
- Quarantined books/journals according to REALM guidelines
- Worked with Library IT to equip staff with microphones and cameras, laptops
- Trained staff to use WebEx, Zoom and MS Teams, and adjust to new workflows
- Coordinated with vendors, Library IT and staff at multiple sites using different communication tools to troubleshoot, upgrade scanner software and hardware
- Developed virtual training program for new staff; delivered via Zoom

UMB RESOURCE SHARING
During Lockdown & Post Lockdown

Category	LOCKDOWN (Mar 14, 2020 - Aug 31, 2020)	POST LOCKDOWN (Sept 1, 2020 - Jun 30, 2021)
UMB Requested	8219	17164
UMB Requests Filled	7251	15566
Filled by Consortia	6028	11680
Filled for Consortia	4558	8732

UMB Fill rate remained *CONSISTENT* between both periods (89%/91%)

The UMB fill rate for Consortia *INCREASED* post lockdown (+29%) while the Consortial fill rate for UMB *DECREASED* (-5%)

$2,776 Doc Del cost *ELIMINATED* post lockdown.

CONCLUSION

Lockdown posed unprecedented challenges to library services. Collaborating with ILL communities, we were able to deliver ILL service largely uninterrupted. Although lack of access to print collections incurred additional cost, it was minimal compared to the number of deliverables. The pandemic further demonstrated the value of open access, and back file investments over the years. Through this exercise, we built an infrastructure and know-how to face future emergencies.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ILL Community collaboration
- Staff resilience, perseverance and adaptability
- Technology preparedness and support

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