

# COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO HOARDING DISORDER

---

**South Shore Community Partners in Prevention Meeting  
March 13,2019**

**Presented By:**

Suzanne Otte, LCSW  
Scituate Hoarding Response Team &  
South Shore Clutter Reduction Collaborative (CHNA20)

# Hoarding:

What is it?

Who hoards?

What are the signs?

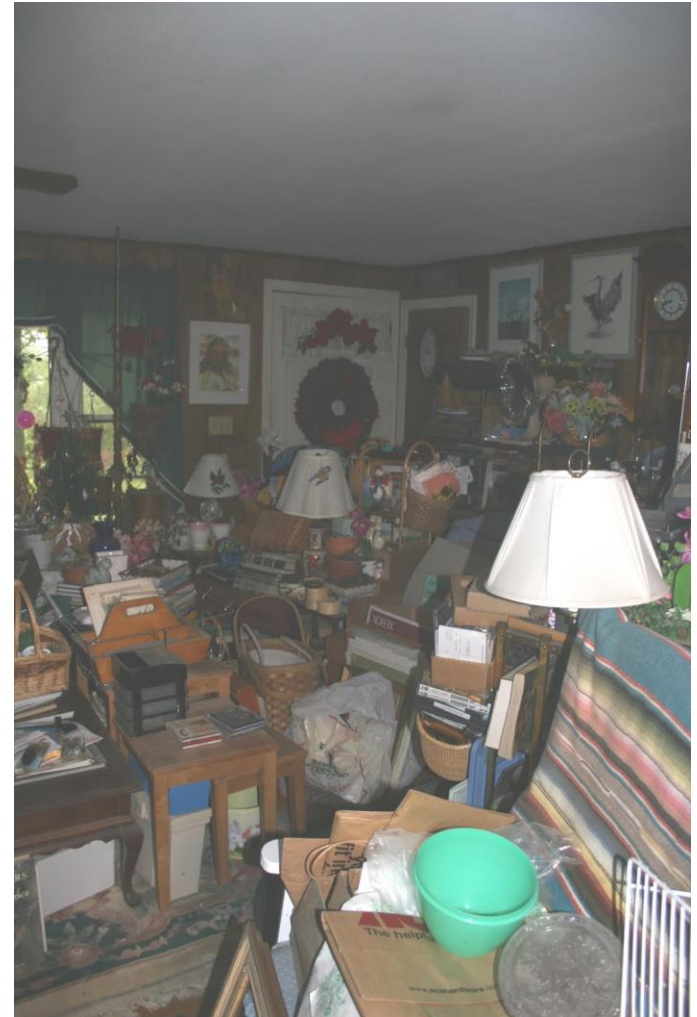
What contributes to the behavior?

How do communities respond?

# What is Hoarding?

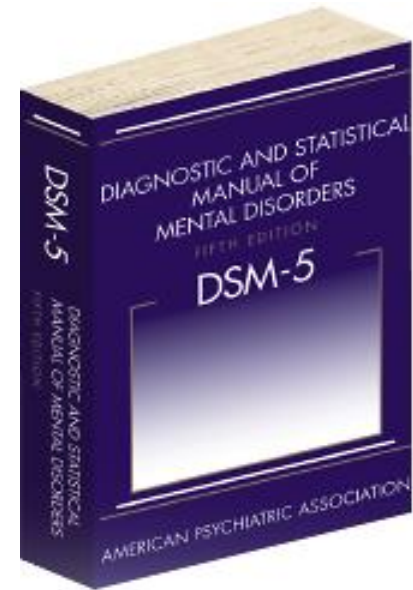
- Is there acquisition of and failure to discard a large volume of possessions?
- Does the clutter make it difficult to use rooms for their intended purpose?
- Is there distress or impairment in functioning caused by the clutter?

(Frost & Hartl, 1996)



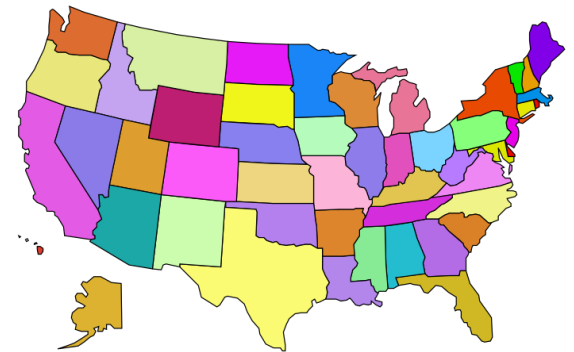
# DSM V Criteria for Hoarding Disorder

- Difficulty discarding and parting with objects
- Difficulty discarding due to urges to save
- Symptoms result in an accumulation of possession that clutter living areas
- Distress or interference
- Not better accounted for by a medical condition



# Prevalence of Hoarding in the U.S.

- 3-5% or approximately 15 million people in the U.S. population has hoarding
- 2-6% in other developed countries
- 5.5 million have Alzheimer's Disease
- 1.2 million HIV
- 787,000 deaths due to Heart Disease



# Who Hoards?

- Saving begins in childhood or adolescence. Average age of onset: 13 years. Treatment protocol not yet established for young people.
- Average age in treatment: 50 years.
- Marital status: tend to be single.
- Education levels vary widely.
- Family history of hoarding is common. Vulnerabilities include genetic predisposition and brain chemistry differences.
- Squalid conditions are uncommon among treatment seekers.

# Co-occurring Disorders

Major Depressive Disorder	50.7%
Attention Deficit Disorder	27.8%
Generalized Anxiety Disorder	24.4%
Social Phobia	23.5%
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder	17.0%
Specific Phobia	14.3%
Kleptomania	9.9%
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	6.9%
Substance Abuse	1.8%
Bipolar Disorder	1.4%
Eating Disorder	1.4%

(Frost, et. al., 2011)

# Recognizing a Hoarding Problem



# Indicators of a Possible Hoarding Problem

- ✓ A “no access” area in the home.
- ✓ Endless talk about the stuff.
- ✓ Difficulty throwing things away.
- ✓ Acquiring too much, too often.
- ✓ Home and personal spaces filled with clutter.
- ✓ Difficulty sorting, organizing, and making decisions.
- ✓ Safe and comfortable functioning limited in the home.



# What are the Signs of Hoarding?

## 1. Clutter:

Large piles, narrow paths, and disorganization

## 2. Saving:

Sentimental, instrumental, or intrinsic reasons

## 3. Acquiring:

Shopping, free items, kleptomania



# Why Do People Hoard?

Evolutionary  
Biology

Genetics

Neurobiology

Thoughts

Emotions

Life  
Experiences



# Community Response

# Team-Based Approach

## Scituate Hoarding Response Team

### Roles:

- Enforcement vs. Support

### Why:

- Opportunity to reduce clutter and address issues contributing to the hoarding behavior.
- Increased range of knowledge, skill, and expertise becomes available with a multi-disciplinary approach.
- More likely to identify wider range of resources with multiple helpers involved.



# Programming

## Buried in Treasures Groups (2016 – Present)

- > 75 South Shore participants served
- Weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly formats
- Home visits and data collection
- Funded by MassHousing & Town of Scituate

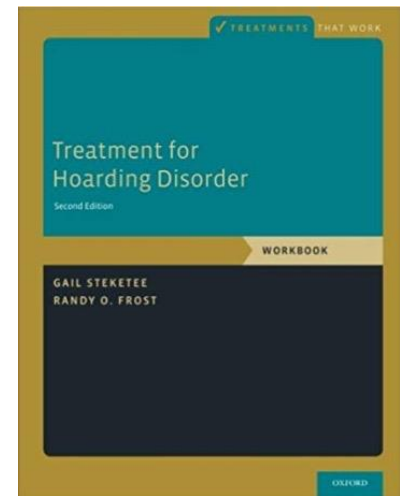


## Community Education

- Annual forums held to discuss Hoarding Disorder and intervention

# CHNA20 Impact

- Partnership with Towns of Scituate and Hingham and Boston University School of Social Work (2018 – Present)
- Two Online Group Treatment for Hoarding Disorder groups (20 weeks per group)
- Community event: Pursuing a Life Less Cluttered
- Training: 3 day seminar for peer leaders
- Website: Information sharing and program coordination
- Group outcomes to be published and presented in collaboration with Boston University



Please visit:

[www.SouthShoreCRC.org](http://www.SouthShoreCRC.org)

# South Shore Clutter Reduction Collaborative



Creating Sustainable Hoarding Support Programs and Services on the  
South Shore of Massachusetts.