Presentation on Forming a Hoarding Task Force

O4A

25th Annual Conference on Aging

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Objectives

• Participants will understand how the Cuyahoga County Hoarding Task Force was formed

• Participants will understand why a task force is necessary to work with hoarders

• Participants will understand the key elements needed to form a county wide task force

• Participants will understand the elements necessary to sustain a task force
The Hoarding Connection of Cuyahoga County
www.hoardingconnectioncc.org

Over 20 Entities
• Mix of both Public and Private Agencies – a loose affiliation of individuals united around common goals
• Anchored by the ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County, Benjamin Rose and Adult Protective Services of Cuyahoga County
• Is not incorporated in any fashion
• Depends on individuals who are committed to working together
• Works to provide education and awareness to the community in general as well as to first responders and professionals
• Relies on agencies and members to volunteer time for the committee
Hoarding Disorder

Review of Basics

• Stand alone Diagnosis in the DSM 5 (300.3 (F42))
• Characterized by
  • Persistent difficulty discarding or parting with possessions
  • The accumulation will compromise active living areas
  • Will cause significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning
  • Will often have co-morbid mental health issues
• Age of onset in early adulthood (Grishan, et al.; Ayers, et. al.)
• Seldom have cognitive impairments (Steketee, 2001)
  • Lack of insight and resistance to change led to ineffective treatment
  • Never married status was associated with more severe hoarding, greater impairment and worse outcomes.
History of the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging

How we got to this point in time

• Founded in 1908
• Mission to provide for the Elderly
  • Initially gave money away
  • Began services and research in the 1950’s
  • Offer multiple services to the Elderly
• Opened a Mental Health Unit in 1989 – no psychiatry, all work in the community
• Currently a 13 person unit
• Average Daily census of about 320
• Age 55 and above, residents of Cuyahoga County with a mental illness
History (continued)

Case Examples

• “Alice” – circa 1978 – material hoarder
  • Widowed – late 60’s
  • Referred by private attorney
  • Moved 7 room house into 2 bedroom apartment
  • As health deteriorated, moved from apartment to Assisted Living to eventual nursing home placement
Case Examples

• “Bill” – early 70’s, animal and material hoarder
• Never married
• Referred by trailer park management in the process of evicting him.
• Evicted from the trailer park, relocated to an apartment and evicted again
• Expired in the hospital while still maintaining an apartment
History

Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Grant – 2005-2009

• Designed to identify and help Seniors (60+) in crisis
• Collaboration with multiple agencies
  • The ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County
  • Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging
  • Recovery Resources
  • Adult Protective Services
  • Adult Guardianship Services
  • Frontline Services
History

SAMHSA Grant
• Design used a screening tool to provide a numerical indicator of level of crisis
• Individuals meeting a crisis level offered services of the grant team
  • Three person assessment within 24 hours
    • Adult Protective Services worker
    • Nurse from Adult Protective Services
    • Mental Health professional from Frontline
  • Substance Abuse – sent to Recovery Resources
  • No substance abuse – sent to Ben Rose
History

- BRIA took in over 125 clients under the SAMHSA grant

- Hoarding clients were so numerous that Project Administrators brought in trainers from Orange County, CA to train project staff on dealing with hoarding issues

- Led to another grant request to start a hoarding task force

- Received six month grant and started a task force using the SAMHSA project as a spring board

- Main function was to staff community cases
So Why is Task Force Necessary?

Incidence and Prevalence

- Incidence - 5% Samuels (2008)
- Cost – San Francisco Study – Beyond Overwhelmed
  - Estimated 2.01 million per year (not including costs of loss to the individual hoarder)
  - Recommended annual allotment of 100,000 just for the treatment of hoarding disorder
- Risk to the individual, to their neighbors, to society at large (fire, rodents, bedbugs, roaches, etc.)
- Can’t be addressed be any single entity – requires a multi-disciplinary/agency approach. Hoarding is everyone’s business!
Elements of a Task Force

Leadership
Key Players
• Mental Health Board
• Adult Protective Services
• Board of Health (County and or local communities)
• Housing Court
• City Building Departments
• Sanitation Workers
• First Responders (police and fire)
• Organizers and clean up specialists
Elements of a Task Force (continued)

Players (continued)

Animal Control
Researchers

Location
Assistance with Administrative Tasks
• Taking of minutes
• Scheduling meetings, reserving rooms, etc.

Mission Statement
Common Goals
Maintaining Focus on Goals and how to achieve them
Elements of a Task Force (continued)

Knowledge of Resources

Development of Resources

Development of Protocols and Recommendations

Task Agenda

Contact information for key parties
Problem Areas

Differentiation Hoarders from Non-Hoarders

It’s about more than just the stuff - back to Diagnosis

• Inability to discard
• Constant acquisition of goods
• Impairment of function for rooms
• Social isolation – alienated from family & friends
Summary

Need
• Numbers of Hoarders in the community
• Complexity of problem resolution

Invested Parties
• Mental Health Boards
• Mental Health Clinicians
• Adult Protective Services
• Housing
  • Courts
  • Apartment building Resident Coordinators
  • Local city building departments
  • Animal control officers
  • Bailiffs
• Health Departments
  • County
  • City and township
Summary

**Invested Entities** (continued)

Boards of Health
- County
- City and Local

Departments of Aging

Organizers

Trash removal/clean up specialists

**Elements of a Task Force**
- Leadership
- Key Players
- Common Goals
- Mission Statement (to maintain focus)
- Administrative Support
- Knowledge of Resources
- Development of Protocols
References


Suggested Readings


Suggested Readings


Coming Clean, by Kimberly Rae Miller, New Harvest, 2013