

Guidelines on hoarding launched by psychologists

June 15 2015

New guidelines providing information, guidance and recommendations for people working with those with hoarding difficulties are launched today, Tuesday 16 June 2015, in London by the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP).

The free guidelines, 'A psychological perspective on hoarding: DCP good [practice guidelines](#)' have been compiled by clinical psychologists, using expertise and evidence from this area of research. It also includes contributions from those living with hoarding issues as well as their carers.

Lead Consultant Clinical Psychologist at Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and author of the guidelines Sophie Holmes said:

"Although hoarding is now recognised as a distinct [mental health](#) difficulty with a relatively high media profile it can still be challenging for those affected to access appropriate [mental health services](#).

Hoarding can have a huge impact on a person's ability to function independently and carry a high level of risk for themselves and others. The costs to the person who hoards and may be living in extremely compromised accommodation can be physical, psychological, social and financial. The risks are also high for children who have parents who hoard, or for older adults who live with someone who hoards."

The recommendations include:

- Mental health and social care services should provide services for people with hoarding difficulties regardless of how they access services.
- The media should seek advice from experts about the portrayal of people with hoarding problems and desist from using mental health problems to entertain and shock the public.
- Interventions for people who hoard need to be broader than focused on the individual. These need to be offered to the wider network, thus supporting the person and the community in which they live.

Sophie Holmes continues: "A high dropout rate from therapy suggests we need to rethink our approach and actively engage with people, in order to improve quality of life and wellbeing, and reduce risks. This document reflects some of the latest in psychological thinking and has the benefit of including the views of those with expertise through experience, as well as carers. We hope it will be a valuable resource for those working in the NHS, social Care, policy makers and commissioners of services."

More information: www.bps.org.uk/

Provided by British Psychological Society

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