

CLUTTER SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

A comprehensive screening tool is key to determining whether the reported situation is in fact a hoarding situation. The following screening tool, developed by Gail Steketee, PhD, Boston University School of Social Work, is an example of the kind of tool needed to assist with an initial assessment.

Hoarding Assessment Tool

A. Do you have a problem with excessive clutter in your home?

- Yes / No

B. Have family members, friends or visitors ever suggested that you need to reduce the clutter in your home?

- Yes / No

C. To what extent does the clutter interfere with using rooms in your home in a normal way?

- **0 = No interference.**
- **1 = Mild interference.** Up to $\frac{1}{4}$ of the home cluttered and not easily usable for normal activities of daily living such as sitting, eating, sleeping, socializing, cooking, etc.
- **2 = Moderate interference.** Approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the home is cluttered and not easily usable for normal activities of daily living.
- **3 = Severe interference.** Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the home is cluttered and not easily usable for normal activities of daily living.
- **4 = Extreme interference.** Nearly all of the home is cluttered and not easily usable for normal activities of daily living.

D. When you try to clear out the clutter, how much distress or emotional upset do you experience?

- **0 = None.**
- **1 = Mild.** Not too disturbing
- **2 = Moderate.** Disturbing but still manageable
- **3 = Severe.** Very Disturbing
- **4 = Extreme.** Near constant and disabling distress

E. To what extent do you have a problem with collecting or buying more things than you need or can use?

- **0 = No problem**
- **1 = Mild problem.** Occasionally (less than weekly) acquires items not needed, or acquires a few unneeded items
- **2 = Moderate.** Regularly (once or twice weekly) acquires items not needed, or acquires many unneeded items.
- **3 = Severe.** Frequently (several times per week) acquires items not needed, or acquires many unneeded items
- **4 = Extreme.** Very often (daily) acquires items not needed, or acquires large numbers of unneeded items

Risk Assessment - The immediate requirement is for a preliminary assessment of the site regarding fire, public or personal health issues and safety.

Where necessary notification and referral should be made for a more in-depth assessment by public health, fire, SPCA, health care providers, and/or family; especially if these key players were not involved in the initial eviction prevention planning.

As appropriate, an on-site mental health, physical and social assessment needs to be undertaken by a worker skilled in motivational interviewing and with in-depth knowledge about hoarding.

Each assessment will gather additional information to support the development of an effective care plan for the senior at high-risk.