



## Local Hoarding Task Force Initiative Grants FY19 Final Report: August 2019



Local and regional hoarding task forces, collaboratives or teams bring together local partners to plan, sponsor trainings and community education events, discuss and strategize around cases, develop, coordinate and/or provide services including coaching, sorting, discarding and cleanups, and organize professional and/or peer led support groups.

With the support of the MA Statewide Steering Committee on Hoarding (SSCH), MassHousing awarded grant funding to over twenty different task forces during FY15-19. Lead agencies include county government, cities, towns, a CDC, and mental health and elder nonprofits. These lead agencies and their local partners often commit additional resources including professional staff time of social workers, case managers and outreach workers, office space, supplies and administrative support, and leverage additional service funding.

*"Since FY15 when ClearPath first received Mannillo grant funding from MassHousing, this funding has leveraged over \$85,000 of additional income from other sources."  
Lynn Faust, Executive Director, Marlborough CDC*

### **FY2019 Summary:**

- Local meetings convening regularly, attended by professionals from varied disciplines.
- 33 professional or peer led support groups, totaling 493 sessions and 283 participants.
- 47 public community education events, workshops or trainings held with 643 participants.
- 189 affected households identified; of 130 interventions, 122 positive outcomes to date.
- 60 households receiving 670 hours of clean up, sorting & discarding and/or coaching.

Highlights from final reports submitted by the local lead agencies for the grant period include:



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

The **Cape Cod Hoarding Task Force** (CCHTF) members met every two months and included invited speakers, case discussion and updates. A community education event drew forty participants in February held at the Cape Cod Museum of Art. Five Buried in Treasures (BIT) groups met weekly across the Cape with forty-three participants, including twelve requesting additional direct services, receiving almost fifty hours of sorting and discarding assistance.



[www.strongcommunity.org/clearpath-hoarding](http://www.strongcommunity.org/clearpath-hoarding)

**ClearPath** serves two geographic regions, MetroWest and southern Nashoba Valley with goals to increase the wellness for those who clutter, and to increase the capacity of professionals and peers to deliver low cost hoarding mitigation programs. All ClearPath peer groups and workshops are offered free of charge. In FY2019, ClearPath served about five hundred people including: peer group participants, public education, training for municipal workers, clutter coaches, and facilitators; consultation by phone and in person to agencies and municipalities throughout the state; in-home assessments and harm reduction checkups; and in-court support to two TPP clients to avoid eviction.

*"Peers who coach de-cluttering sessions are more successful, and peer coaches report that helping others to declutter encourages them to declutter more at their homes."*

*Lynn Faust, Executive Director, Marlborough CDC*



The **Greater Brockton Hoarding Task Force (GBHTF)** conducted two BIT support groups spanning fifteen weeks with seventeen participants. Pre and post self-assessments and Clutter Image Ratings have been recorded indicating mostly positive improvements. Due to continuing need, Old Colony Elder Services (OCES) funded and operated two additional support groups. OCES also sponsored an educational event for affected family attended by over twenty-five family members and professionals, while continuing other public outreach efforts.

*"It was slow process for myself but I can see improvement in myself." "It gave me a new outlook and helpful strategies to approach clearing clutter and being in a supportive group." BIT group participants, GBHTF*



The **Greater Lynn Hoarding Outreach Partnership Effort (HOPE)** sponsored a variety of activities this year including regular task force meetings, three professionally led groups (one mindfulness, one declutters, one friends and family), four fire community in-service trainings, one public community outreach event with over fifty attendees, and assistance with heavy chore, sorting and discarding, coaching, and organizational aids and supplies.

*"... we thank you (MassHousing) so much for your confidence in our task force and for your invaluable help with people in our community who struggle with hoarding disorder."*

*Michele Martindale, LICSW, Hoarding Outreach Specialist, GLSS*



The **New Bedford Department of Community Services' Fresh Start Program**, in partnership with the Fairhaven Board of Health, has sponsored multiple BIT groups, provided assessments, service plans and sorting and discarding assistance to clients, and conducted major community outreach and education initiatives.

*When her home was first assessed, she was found to have a score of five on the Clutter Image Rating Scale (CIR) in her kitchen. Specifically, she was unable to access or use her stove, her kitchen counters were cluttered making meal preparation impossible and her kitchen table was too cluttered to use at meal time. Her kitchen has now dropped down to a score of one on the CIR... Her progress has brought hope and optimism to other participants in the Buried in Treasure group.*

*Anne O'Donnell, LICSW, New Bedford Fresh Start*



The **Newton Hoarding Task Force** held two community education events with a total of over sixty-five attendees, helped nine residents with sorting and discarding through the Wellesley College Intern program (five supervised interns), and trained nine recovery peers in the Buried in Treasures model of coaching. The interdisciplinary task force continues to have regularly scheduled meetings with the goal of assisting residents and their families, community education, and information and referral to treatment and other clinical services.

*"Just accepting assistance is a big step ..... However, we know accepting help can lead to increased engagement with community and clinical support. We appreciate the support of this grant and the ability to continue to educate our community and further develop resources for those in need."*

*Pam Weissman, LICSW, Director of Social Services, City of Newton*



*Life. Made Easier.*

The **North Shore Hoarding Task Force** assisted over sixty individuals ranging in age from 31 to 90 with individual crisis case management and group costs, including nineteen with full or partial cost of a ten week support group. Photos of client progress have demonstrated a clear and accessible back egress that was obstructed for years and a completely clear dining room table for the first time in a decade. One animal hoarding case is now in compliance with their kennel license, and the program manager/clinical hoarding specialist has consulted on three additional hoarding cases, including one in MA where 260 animals were surrendered.

*"The MassHousing grant provided the opportunity of making support groups accessible to clients with demonstrated financial need ..... These groups have demonstrated profound group cohesion where the members continue to reach out to one another for support outside of group sessions. The MassHousing grant funds are imperative in the North Shore Hoarding Task Force's vision of making our clinical, and crisis management services more accessible to those in need while creating a sustainable program..... I am very proud to say that I have not had to turn anyone away because of their inability to afford our services, and this is much in part due to the grant funds."*

*Eileen Dacey, MSW, LCSW, Clinical Specialist, NSES*



The **Scituate Hoarding Response Team (SHRT)** is a multidisciplinary team that strives to achieve a comprehensive, informed response to hoarding and related needs in the community. SHRT generally meets bimonthly to discuss community events and resource planning and to conduct case consultation. This year the team launched an online live BIT Skills Group preceded by self paced online foundation podcasts. SHRT also continues to support and develop the South Shore Clutter Reduction Collaborative website [www.southshorecrc.org](http://www.southshorecrc.org). One hundred sixteen persons have signed on to the site e-list, and almost a thousand persons have viewed the e-newsletter.

*"It has been a long-time goal of the Scituate Hoarding Response Team (SHRT) to work to develop sustainable services to those living with problem clutter on the South Shore ..... our members wish to thank MassHousing, the Statewide Steering Committee on Hoarding, and the generous funding of the Lee A. Mannillo grant for the opportunity to work towards this goal."*

*Laura Minier, LICSW, Manager of Social Services, Town of Scituate*



The **Watertown Hoarding Task Force** continued a multi-pronged approach including a monthly clutter support group meeting, trained coaches, a licensed clinician, a professional organizer, heavy chore services and at-home coaching, and connecting individuals to services at Riverside Community Care.

*"The clients were each evaluated on the clutter image rating scale by the social worker and the in-home coach. Each of the clients made significant progress over their work sessions."*

*Wil van Dinter, Watertown Public Health Nurse*

MassHousing and the MA SSCH thank all the groups and individuals above for their dedication and hard work on this important issue and look forward to an impactful FY2020.

*Local Hoarding Task Force work was championed in Massachusetts by **Lee A. Mannillo**, a founding member and chair of the Cape Cod Hoarding Task Force whose life was too short.*



*Lee's skill, dedication and enthusiasm is missed by all who do this work in Massachusetts and beyond, but her inspiration lives on in the communities and the initiatives of all local task forces, teams and collaboratives.*