



Massachusetts Statewide Steering  
Committee on Hoarding



## Mannillo HTF Local Initiative Grants FY20 Final Report: November 2020

Local and regional hoarding networks, 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 FY15-20. 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.

*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*

### **FY2020 Summary:**

It would be neglect not to note that the Covid-19 pandemic brought many programs and services to a sudden halt in March 2020. Over the months since, many grantees have worked creatively to develop and move to online groups and meetings. Unfortunately, in person activities will continue to be limited for months to come.

### **FY2020 by the numbers (pre-pandemic):**

- Local meetings convening regularly, attended by professionals from varied disciplines.
- 31 professional or peer led support groups, totaling 260 sessions and 309 participants.
- 23 public community education events, workshops or trainings held with 435 participants.
- 82 affected households identified; of 40 interventions, 35 positive outcomes to date.
- 46 households receiving 489 hours of clean up, sorting & discarding and/or coaching.

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



The **Brookline HTF**, chaired by a Brookline Community Mental Health Center clinician, in its first year has focused on outreach, training, resource and policy development and relationship building. Twelve members of the HTF participated in a collaborative training triggering increased empathy and shared language, evaluation planning, first responder procedural enhancements and further training.



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

The **Cape Cod HTF** members met every two months pre-Covid and included invited speakers, case discussion, data analysis and updates. Four Buried in Treasures (BIT) groups met weekly across the Cape with thirty-six participants, including five requesting additional direct services, receiving fifteen hours of sorting and discarding assistance. Over one hundred BIT and other reference books were provided to local regional groups and participants



[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 FY2020, ClearPath served over 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; and in-home assessments and harm reduction checkups. In response to Covid, ClearPath has made a transition from in person groups to Zoom Videoconferencing.

*"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, Metro CDC*



The **Greater Brockton Hoarding TF (GBHTF)** conducted two BIT support groups spanning fifteen to eighteen weeks with nineteen participants. Pre and post self-assessments and Clutter Image Ratings (CIR) have been recorded indicating mostly positive improvements.

*"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)** has worked to reenergize HOPE and its members after the retirement of its long time leader. Although planned community wide outreach and training events for the spring were not able to occur, informal trainings, case interventions, consultations, and other services and supervision were provided.



The **New Bedford Department of Community Services' Fresh Start Program**, in partnership with the Fairhaven Board of Health, has sponsored three BIT groups, provided assessments, service plans and sorting and discarding assistance to clients, and conducted local 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 HTF** held four interdisciplinary task force meetings prior to Covid with the goal of assisting residents and their families, community education, and information and referral to treatment and other clinical services. Some funding this year was used to assist targeted residents of Newton Housing Authority. Unfortunately, the successful Intern program and community education events were suspended also due to Covid, but some support groups continued.



Life. Made Easier.

The **North Shore HTF** assisted over sixty individuals ranging in age from 36 to 85 with individual crisis case management and group costs, including sixty-two with full or partial cost of eight week support groups. 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 continued a popular online live BIT Skills Group preceded by self paced online foundation podcasts. Individual clinical support and coaching services were provided to group participants. SHRT also continues to support and develop the South Shore Clutter Reduction Collaborative website [www.southshorecrc.org](http://www.southshorecrc.org).

*"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."*

*SHRT Team, Town of Scituate*



The **Watertown HTF** continued a multi-faceted 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*

The **Western MA HD Resource Network** held its annual conference attended by over forty participants. A shift to online activities (virtual BIT workshop series) has been successfully implemented.

MassHousing and the MA SSCH thank all the groups and individuals above for their dedication and hard work prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We also want to acknowledge SSCH members and local team leaders who have moved on from their position, but have made tremendous impact with their contributions to this effort:

Laura Minier, SHRT, Scituate  
Michele Martindale, HOPE, Lynn  
Pam Weissman, NHTF, Newton

We look forward to a safe and healthy 2021.

*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, networks, teams and collaboratives.*