

Adult Social Care Operations

Hoarding Practice Toolkit

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Introduction

This toolkit is to be used in conjunction with the Self-Neglect and Hoarding Procedure and Bedbug Guidelines.

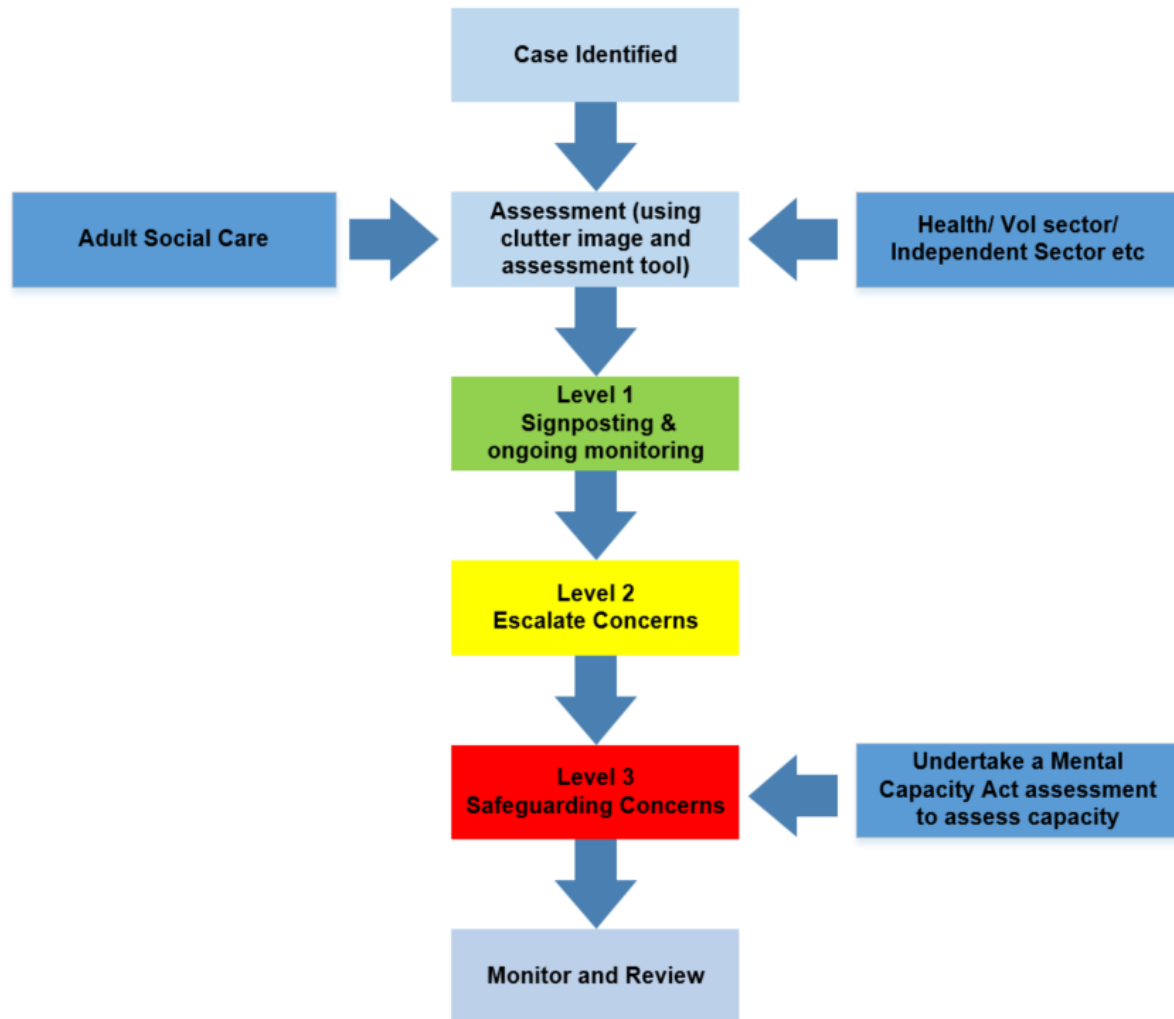
Contents

1. Process for Clutter Image Rating Tool (CIRT).....	3
2. Clutter Image Rating Scale.....	4
3. Assessment Tool Guidelines	6
4. Clutter/ Hygiene Rating Framework.....	8
5. Guidance for Practitioners – Insight Characteristics	14
6. Practitioners Hoarding Assessment.....	14
7. Guidance questions to be used during an assessment.....	17

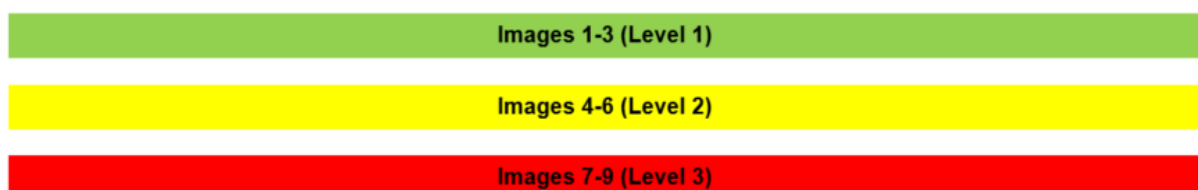
1. Process for Clutter Image Rating Tool (CIRT)

The flowchart delineating the procedure to be implemented.

The flowchart below outlines the procedure for utilizing the Clutter Image Rating Tool. Should you have any uncertainties, kindly consult your line manager for guidance.



Please use the Clutter Image Rating Tool to determine the severity of hoarding



Subsequently, consult the Clutter Assessment Tool to determine the appropriate course of action. Ensure that all actions are documented in Azeus, including any discussions with other professionals, measures implemented, and any actions pending.

2. Clutter Image Rating Scale

The photographs that most precisely represent the level of clutter in the rooms should be used to determine the hoarding level to be applied in your assessment.

2.1. Bedroom

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room.



1

2

3



4

5

6



7

8

9

2.2. Lounge

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

2.3. Kitchen

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in the room.



1

2

3



4

5

6



7

8

9

3. Assessment Tool Guidelines

To apply the tool and obtain the clutter rating for your assessment, please refer to Appendix 1 for guidance on the questions that may be useful during your assessment.

Property Structure Services and Garden Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the access to all entrances and exits for the property. (Note impact on any communal entrances & exits). Include access to roof space. Can the occupant escape from all rooms in the event of a fire or other emergency? Is there a clear plan of what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency and does everyone in the home know it?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the property have a working smoke-alarm? • Carry out a cursory visual assessment of the condition of the services within the property e.g. plumbing, electrics, gas, air conditioning, heating; this will help inform your next course of action. • Are essential services connected? • Assess the garden: size, access and condition.
Household Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the current functionality of the rooms and the safety for their proposed use. e.g. can the kitchen be safely used for cooking, can the occupier(s) properly use the bathroom/ WC or does the level of clutter within the room prevent their normal use. • Select the appropriate rating on the clutter scale. • Please estimate the % of floor space covered by clutter • Please estimate the height of the clutter in each room
Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the level of sanitation in the property. • Are the floors clean and are readily cleansed? • Are the work surfaces clean? • Are you aware of any odours in the property? • Is there rotting food? • Does the resident use candles, portable electric or gas heaters? • Did you witness a higher than expected number of flies and other insects? • Are household members struggling with personal care? • Is there random or chaotic writing on the walls on the property? • Are there unreasonable amounts of medication collected? • (Prescribed or over the counter?) • Is there evidence of illegal drug use? • Is the resident aware of any fire risk associated to the clutter in the property? • Is there faecal matter, urine or other body fluids visible within the property?
Safeguard of Children & Family Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do any rooms rate 7 or above on the clutter rating scale? • Does the household contain young people or children?
Animals and Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any pets at the property? • Are the pets well cared for; are you concerned about their health? • Is there evidence of any infestation? e.g. bed bugs, cockroaches, fleas, rats, mice, etc. • Are animals being hoarded at the property? If so, are they healthy and being well looked after. • Are outside areas seen by the resident as a wildlife area? • Does the resident leave food out in their garden to feed foxes or other animals.
Personal Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following your assessment, do you recommend the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at future visits? Please detail.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following your assessment do you recommend the resident is visited in pairs or with the Police? Please detail.
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4. Clutter/ Hygiene Rating Framework

Clutter/ Hygiene Rating Level 1 Actions

Rating Clutter Images 1-3 (Level 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household environment is considered reasonable. No specialist assistance is needed. If the resident would like some assistance with general housework or feels they are declining towards a higher clutter scale, appropriate referrals can be made subject to age and circumstances.
Property structure, services & garden area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All entrances and exits, stairways, roof space and windows accessible Smoke alarms fitted and functional or referrals made to London Fire Service for Fire safety check and separate clutter rating All services functional and maintained in good working order Garden is accessible, tidy and maintained
Household Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No excessive clutter, all rooms can be safely used for their intended purpose. All rooms are rated 0-3 on the Clutter Rating Scale No additional unused household appliances appear in unusual locations around the property Property is maintained within terms of any lease or tenancy agreements where appropriate Property is not at risk of action by Environmental Health
Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property is clean with no odours, (pet or other) No rotting food No concerning use of candles No concern over flies Residents managing personal care No writing on the walls Quantities of medication are within appropriate limits, in date and stored appropriately.
Safeguard of Children & Family Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No concerns for household members.
Animals and Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pets at the property are well cared for no pests or infestations at the property
Personal Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Personal protective equipment (PPE) required No visit in pairs required
Level 1	Actions
Service/Team holding the case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss concerns with resident Raise a request to the Fire and Rescue Service to provide fire safety advice Refer for Care Act assessment if appropriate. Refer to GP if appropriate
Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No action
Social Landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide details on debt advice if appropriate to circumstances

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to GP if appropriate • Refer for support assessment if appropriate. • Provide details of support streams open to the resident via charities and self-help groups. • Provide details on debt advice if appropriate to circumstances • Ensure residents are maintaining all tenancy conditions
Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Hoarding Assessment • Make appropriate referrals for support • Refer to social landlord if the client is their tenant or leaseholder
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure information is shared with statutory agencies & feedback is provided to referring agency on completion of home visits.
Animal Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action unless advice requested
Safeguarding Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted
MASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider referring any children or young persons present to Early Help unless other sources of abuse are noted, in which case refer to MASH

Clutter /Hygiene rating Level 2 Actions

Rating Clutter Images 4-6 (Level 2)	Household environment requires professional assistance to resolve the matter and the maintenance issues of the property.
Property Structure, Services & Garden Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only major exit is blocked • Only one of the services is not fully functional • Concern that services are not well maintained • Smoke alarms are not installed or not functioning • Garden is not accessible due to clutter, or is not maintained • Evidence of indoor items stored outside • Evidence of light structural damage including damp
Household Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interior doors missing or blocked open • Clutter is causing congestion in the living spaces and is impacting on the use of the rooms for their intended purpose. • Clutter is causing congestion between the rooms and entrances. • Room(s) scores between 4-5 on the clutter scale. • Inconsistent levels of housekeeping throughout the property • Some household appliances are not functioning properly and there may be additional units in unusual places. • Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy agreement where applicable. • Evidence of outdoor items being stored inside • Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy • Evidence of outdoor items being stored inside
Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen and bathroom are not kept clean Offensive odour in the property

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident is not maintaining safe cooking environment • Some concern with the quantity of medication, or its storage or expiry dates • No rotting food • No concerning use of candles • Resident trying to manage personal care but struggling
Safeguard of Children & Family Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoarding on clutter scale 4 - 7 doesn't automatically constitute a Safeguarding Alert • Please note all additional concerns for householders • Properties with children or vulnerable residents with 'additional support' needs may trigger a Safeguarding Alert under a different risk
Animals and Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pets at the property are not well cared for • Resident is not unable to control the animals • Animal's living area is not maintained and smells • Animals appear to be under nourished or over fed • Sound of mice heard at the property. • Spider webs in house • Light insect infestation (bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, etc.) • Refer to RSPCA for advice and guidance
Personal Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latex Gloves, boots or needle stick safe shoes, face mask, hand sanitizer, insect repellent. • Personal protective equipment required
Level 2	Actions
Service/Team holding the case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to landlord if resident is a tenant Refer to • Environmental Health • Raise a request to the London Fire Brigade to provide fire prevention advice • Provide details of garden services • Refer for support assessment • Referral to GP/MDT • Referral to debt advice if appropriate • Refer to Animal welfare if there are animals at the property • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution
Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Environmental Health with details of client, landlord (if relevant) referrer's details and overview of problems where appropriate • At time of inspection, Environmental Health Officer decides on appropriate course of action • Consider serving notices under Public Health Act 1936, Environmental Protection Act 1990, Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 or Housing Act 2004 • Consider Works in Default if notices not complied with by occupier
Social Landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit resident to inspect the property & assess support needs • Refer for housing related support • Ensure residents are maintaining all tenancy conditions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce tenancy conditions relating to resident's responsibilities • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution
Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to "Guidance for Hoarding Guidance Questions to Ask" • Complete Practitioners Assessment Tool • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution • Provide feedback to referring agency on completion of home visits
Animal Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit property to undertake a wellbeing check on animals at the property • Educate client regarding animal welfare if appropriate - seek advice from the RSPCA. • Provide advice / assistance with re-homing animals
Safeguarding Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action unless other concerns of abuse are noted • If other concerns of abuse are of concern or have been reported, progression to safeguarding referral and investigation may be necessary
MASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider referring any children or young persons present to MASH or Early Help unless other sources of abuse are noted, in which case refer to MASH

Clutter /Hygiene rating Level 3 Actions

Rating Clutter Images 7-9 (Level 3)	Multi-agency approach with the involvement from a wide range of professionals. This level of hoarding constitutes a Safeguarding alert due to the significant risk to health of the householders, surrounding properties and residents. Residents are often unaware of the implication of their hoarding actions and oblivious to the risk it poses.
Property Structure, Services & Garden Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access to the property due to extreme clutter • Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter seen at windows • Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter outside the property • Garden not accessible and extensively overgrown • Services not connected or not functioning properly • Smoke alarms not fitted or not functioning • Property lacks ventilation due to clutter • Interior doors missing or blocked open • Evidence of structural damage or outstanding repairs including damp • Evidence of internal damp and / or mould • Evidence of indoor items stored outside
Household Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter seen at windows

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence may be seen of extreme clutter outside the property • Garden not accessible and extensively overgrown • Services not connected or not functioning properly • Smoke alarms not fitted or not functioning • Property lacks ventilation due to clutter • Interior doors missing or blocked open • Evidence of structural damage or outstanding repairs including damp • Evidence of internal damp and / or mould. • Evidence of indoor items stored outside • Clutter is obstructing the living spaces and is preventing the use of the rooms for their intended purpose • Room(s) scores 7 - 9 on the clutter image scale 15 • Rooms not used for intended purposes or very limited • Beds inaccessible or unusable due to clutter or infestation • Entrances, hallways and stairs blocked or difficult to pass • Toilets, sinks not functioning or not in use • Resident at risk due to living environment • Household appliances are not functioning or inaccessible • Resident has no safe cooking environment • Resident is using candles, electric or gas heating appliances • Evidence of outdoor clutter being stored indoors. • No evidence of housekeeping being undertaken • Broken household items not discarded e.g. broken glass or plates • Concern for declining mental health • Property is not maintained within terms of lease or tenancy agreement where applicable • Property is at risk of notice being served by Environmental Health
Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human urine and or excrement may be present • Excessive odour in the property, may also be evident from the outside • Rotting food may be present • Evidence may be seen of unclean, unused and or buried plates & dishes. • Broken household items not discarded e.g. broken glass or plates • Inappropriate quantities or storage of medication. • Pungent odour can be smelt inside the property and possibly from outside • Concern with the integrity of the electrics • Inappropriate use of electrical extension cords or evidence of unqualified work to the electrics • Concern for declining mental health

Safeguard of Children & Family Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hoarding on clutter scale 7-9 constitutes a Safeguarding Alert. Please note all additional concerns for householders
Animals and Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals at the property at risk due the level of clutter in the property Resident may not able to control the animals at the property Animal's living area is not maintained and smells Animals appear to be under nourished or over fed Hoarding of animals at the property Heavy insect infestation (bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, silverfish, etc.) Visible rodent infestation Refer to RSPCA
Personal Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visits where Personal protective equipment (PPE) required: i.e. Latex Gloves, boots or needle stick safe shoes, face mask, hand sanitizer, insect repellent
Level 3	Actions
Service/Team holding the case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise Safeguarding Referral within 24 hours Raise a request to the Fire and rescue service within 24 hours to provide fire prevention advice
Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Environmental Health with details of client, landlord if relevant) referrer's details and overview of problems At time of inspection, EHO decides on appropriate course of action Consider serving notices under Public Health Act 1936, Environmental Protection Act 1990, Prevention of Damage By Pests Act 1949 or Housing Act 2004
Social Landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit resident to inspect the property & assess support needs Attend multi agency MRM meeting Enforce tenancy conditions relating to resident's responsibilities If resident refuses to engage serve Notice of Seeking Possession under Ground 13 to Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988
Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to "Hoarding Guidance Questions for practitioners" See Appendix 1 Complete Practitioners Assessment Tool Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend multi agency MRM meeting on request Ensure information sharing with all agencies involved to ensure a collaborative approach and a sustainable resolution Provide feedback to case holding agency on completion of home visits
Animal Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify the RSPCA for further advice and guidance. Visit property to undertake a wellbeing check on animals at the property Remove animals to a safe environment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate client regarding animal welfare if appropriate • Take legal action for animal cruelty if appropriate • Provide advice / assistance with re-homing animals
Safeguarding Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding alert should progress to referral for multi-agency approach and further investigation of any concerns of abuse. Multiagency strategy meeting required
MASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Children and Young Peoples Services/ MASH if children or young people present (within 24 hours)

5. Guidance for Practitioners – Insight Characteristics

A guide to provide a baseline of the person's attitude towards their hoarding to be used to inform your assessment and approach.

Hoarding Insight characteristics

Use this guide as a baseline to describe the client's attitude towards their hoarding. Provide additional information in your referrals and reports to enable a tailored approach that is relevant to your client.

Good or fair insight:

The client recognises that hoarding – related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are problematic. The client recognises these behaviours in themselves.

Poor insight

The client is mostly convinced that hoarding – related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are not problematic despite evidence to the contrary. The Client might recognise a storage problem but has little self – recognition or acceptance of their own hoarding behaviour.

Absent (delusional) insight

The Client is convinced that hoarding- related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are not problematic despite evidence to the contrary. The Client is completely accepting of their living environment despite the hoarding and possibly a risk to health.

Detached with assigned blame

The client has been away from their property for an extended period. The client has formed a detachment from the hoarded property and is now convinced a 3rd party is to blame for the condition of the property. For example, a burglary has taken place, squatters or other household members.

6. Practitioners Hoarding Assessment

Where to bring together all stages of your assessment, applying the toolkit ratings and action required to inform the plan required.

This assessment tool below needs to be completed by the practitioner in order to decide whether this case should be addressed through a multi-agency strategy meeting, or if this can be managed 'in-house' with the support of partners.

Date of Home Assessment			
Client's Name			
Client's date of birth			
Client contact details			
Type of dwelling	Owner Occupier	Leaseholder	Tenant – name and address of landlord
Household members	Name	Relationship	Date of Birth
Pets if any. Indicate any concerns			
Agencies currently involved. Include contact details			
Non-agency support currently in place			
Client's attitude towards hoarding			
Please indicate if present at property			
Structural damage to property	Insect or rodent infestation	Large number of animals	Clutter outside
Rotten food	Animal waste in house	Concerns over cleanliness	Visible human faeces
Concerns of self-neglect	Concerns for children at property	Concern for other adults at the property	
Using the Clutter scale, please score each of the rooms below			
Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
Kitchen	Bathroom	Lounge/Dining Room	Separate Toilet
Please provide a description of the hoarding problem i.e. presence of human or animal waste, rodents or insects, rotting food, are utilities operational, structural damage, problems with blocked exits, are there combustibles, is there a fire risk?			
Please refer to the multi-agency Hoarding Strategy and Guidance Document tool. Based on the information provided above, what level is your case graded at?			
Level 1 (Green)		Level 2 (Yellow)	Level 3 (Red)

Name of practitioner undertaking assessment			
Name of organisation			
Contact details			
Next actions to be taken			
List of agencies referred to with dates and contact names			

The Risk Assessment

Staff should always complete the generic risk assessment within Azeus for all cases, alongside use of this specific tool for those who hoard. Combined the two assessments provide a framework to help direct practice and facilitate effective case intervention and multi-agency working with adults who are at risk of serious harm or death through self-neglect, risk taking behaviour or refusal of services.

Advocacy and support

It is essential to ensure all efforts are made to ensure the person suspected of self-neglecting and or hoarding is consulted with and included in discussions, with concerns raised directly with them at the earliest opportunity.

The individual concerned should be invited to participate in the multi-agency strategy meeting and offer the necessary support to do so by the case holding agency. If the person's choice is not to attend the meeting the case holding agency must feedback back any decision that is made to the person within a reasonable time period.

If there is concern that the person is in need of additional support to ensure they understand the concerns raised, the involvement of an appropriate advocate must be considered where it is deemed necessary to do so. This may be a friend or family member, or a representative from a voluntary agency or formal Advocacy. Where the individual refuses to participate or engage with agencies or provide access, information obtained from a range of other sources may 'hold the key' to achieving access into the property or to determining areas / levels of risk.

Staff

For staff dealing with cases of self-neglect and or hoarding this can be a stressful time and all agencies should have robust support mechanisms and policies in place, to ensure the health and safety of its employees. This should include practice supervision, peer 21 support, lone working systems and where appropriate access to health and welfare advisory support services.

To enable employees to be effective in dealing with cases of self-neglect and hoarding, employees should also have access to a range of learning and development opportunities either offered by their own organisation, or by a multiagency approach.

7. Guidance questions to be used during an assessment

Questions for practitioners and supervisors to use and consider during their assessment and planning

Listed below are examples of questions to ask where you are concerned about someone's safety in their own home, where you suspect a risk of self-neglect and hoarding? The information gained from these questions will inform a Hoarding Assessment and provide the information needed to alert other agencies. Most clients with a hoarding problem will be embarrassed about their surroundings so adapt the question to suit your assessment with the person.

- How do you get in and out of your property, do you feel safe living here?
- Have you ever had an accident, slipped, tripped up or fallen? How did it happen?
- How have you made your home safer to prevent this (above) from happening again?
- How do you move safely around your home (where the floor is uneven or covered, or there are exposed wires, damp, rot, or other hazards)
- Has a fire ever started by accident?
- How do you get hot water, lighting, heating in here? Do these services work properly?
- Have they ever been tested?
- Do you ever use candles or an open flame to heat and light here or cook with camping gas?
- How do you manage to keep yourself warm? Especially in winter?
- When did you last go out in your garden? Do you feel safe to go out there?
- Are you worried about other people getting in to your garden to try and breaking? Has this ever happened?
- Are you worried about mice, rats or foxes, or other pests? Do you leave food out for them?
- Have you ever seen mice or rats in your home? Have they eaten any of your food? Or got upstairs and be nesting anywhere?
- Can you prepare food, cook and wash up in your kitchen?
- Do you use your fridge? Can I have look in it? How do you keep things cold in the hot weather?
- How do you keep yourself clean? Can I see your bathroom? Are you able to use your bathroom and use the toilet ok? Have a wash, bath, and shower?
- Can you show me where you sleep and let me see your upstairs rooms? Are the stairs safe to walk up? (If there are any) What do you do with your dirty washing?
- Where do you sleep? Are you able to change your bed linen regularly? When did you last change them?
- How do you keep yourself warm at night? Do you have extra coverings to put on your bed if you are cold?
- Are there any broken windows in your home? Any repairs that need to be done?
- Because of the number of possessions, you have, do you find it difficult to use some of your rooms? If so which ones?
- Do you struggle with discarding things or to what extent do you have difficulty discarding (or recycling, selling, giving away) ordinary things that other people would get rid of?