

An approach to Hoarding Disorder for Allied Health professionals working in the community.

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Background

Hoarding is the acquisition and failure to discard possessions that creates occupational dysfunction, stress and impairment and is an accepted diagnosis as part of the DSM V. People with hoarding disorder are becoming more frequently known to health care professionals, although many clinicians find these clients perplexing and difficult to work with. Practical assessment and harm minimisation strategies are available but not well known amongst Allied Health professionals. Living in a hoarding environment poses risk to the dweller including falls, fire risk, entrapment and social isolation.

Methods

Literature about hoarding disorder is limited especially in the context of Allied Health involvement with this group. Clinical experience has been obtained through working with people with hoarding disorder in the clinician's dual capacity as an Occupational Therapist and trans-disciplinary Care Co-ordinator. This presentation will combine both a literature review and clinical experience.

Results

Perspectives from the literature and clinical experience will be discussed in the context of risks associated with living in this environment as well as other common co-morbidities. A range of assessment tools will be explored as well as interventions and harm minimisation strategies for this cohort.

Discussion

Clients suffering from hoarding disorder are more frequently becoming known to health care professionals. Health professionals that are educated about this disorder and equipped with assessment tools and interventions will be better able to provide high quality care to this client group and reduce associated risks.