



**Jewish Family and Children's Service of Greater Philadelphia (JFCS)
2022 Grant Report to the Friends Foundation for the Aging (FFA)
Hoarding Support Program**

1. What problem were you addressing? What solution did you propose to address it?

JFCS' Hoarding Support Program provides support services and awareness around Hoarding Disorder and is open to anyone struggling with Hoarding Disorder in the five-county Philadelphia region with a strategic focus on older adults. While the Hoarding Disorder can impact individuals as early as their teenage years, the Mayo Clinic reports that hoarding tendencies tend to worsen with age, and that the disorder is more common among older adults. Research focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on those experiencing Hoarding Disorder and concurrent mental health disorders (e.g., obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety, depression, etc.) demonstrates that rates and severity of Hoarding Disorder increased as a direct result of the isolation and perceptions of scarcity caused by the pandemic. Furthermore, rates and severity of Hoarding Disorder are on the rise specifically due to a lack of mental health support which were unavailable or limited, as resources were reallocated to more acute, pandemic-related challenges.

2. What actions did you take? What worked and didn't work toward your objectives? Please share any unanticipated benefits or barriers encountered.

As the COVID-19 vaccines became available and risk diminished in 2022, JFCS was able to return to in-home services for individual case management for those who hoard. In 2023, we have focused on shifting to in-person one-on-one work as safety permits, with groups remaining virtual for ease of access. Our attempts to initiate an in-person art therapy group were met with a lot of feedback from potential participants that it is difficult for them to get to the office.

The ability to go back to in-home individualized care has allowed our case managers to better assess the needs of each individual and create a care plan. We also recently secured a new in-home care intern who has expanded our capacity, allowing us to reopen our waiting list as we were able to assign case managers to those in-line. We were also able to increase our group support offerings and started to add trained facilitators who are peers with lived experience of hoarding. Over the past year we trained and engaged three peer facilitators who co-facilitated Buried in Treasures support groups with staff, providing invaluable insight.

We are seeing a need for more immediate intervention based on referrals we receive from Community Legal Services (CLS) and other partners. For example, CLS may refer someone who is going to housing court and facing eviction unless they can get support for hoarding and reduce clutter in a time-limited period. While this is not something JFCS currently has the capacity to address, we are working to identify strategies to accommodate the need and support the client in the best possible manner.

3. How did you measure success – both quantitative and qualitative? Please include numbers and demographics of people touched by the work.

To-date, beginning January 1, 2023, JFCS has served 79 individual clients through our Hoarding Program, over our stated goal of 45, with the following results that we use to measure our success:

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JFCS partners with the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia

- 100% of clients at risk of eviction due to hoarding behaviors maintained housing and avoided eviction.
- 64% improved or maintained the state of clutter in their homes.
- 67% improved or maintained the level of squalor in their homes.
- 67% improved or maintained their Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) impacted due to hoarding within the first year.

These results are slightly lower than our anticipated benchmark of 85% due to the health and safety precautions required by COVID-19, which prevented us from entering client homes to complete assessment.

Our Buried in Treasure support group held three sessions, attended by 36 clients (stated goal was 20), with the following results:

- 56% of participants improved or maintained their Activities of Daily Living.
- 89% improved or maintained scores on the Hoarding Rating Scale.
- 78% improved or maintained scores on the Savings Cognition Inventory.
- 67% improved or maintained scores in the Adult State Hope Scale.

Our Positive Psychology and Hoarding group, new this year, had 16 attendees throughout the 10-week sessions. A new cohort is beginning in March with 22 attendees. Through pre- and post-participation surveys, we found that:

- 67% felt hopeful post group,
- 78% felt their life had meaning, and
- 71% felt a sense of purpose.

The following educational training sessions were held:

- North Carolina Aging Services – 52 attendees
- Mental Health Association of Southwestern Pennsylvania co facilitated session – 100 attendees
- Jewish Family Service of Seattle – 12 attendees
- Habitat for Humanity – 15 attendees
- The Lincoln Center – 12 attendees
- Pennsylvania Black Health Matters Conference webinar – unknown attendees, in the hundreds
- Positive Psychology and Hoarding Training – 51 attendees

4. How did partnerships/collaborations enhance or challenge the project?

JFCS is part of the Philadelphia Hoarding Task Force, through which we maintain a partnership with Pennsylvania Integrated Pest Management, National Association on Professional Organizing (NAPO), the local fire department, Department of Behavioral Health, and others. These partnerships are helpful in that we are able to extend our resources, discuss complex cases, refer to each other, and build relationships. We also maintain a working relationship with Christiana Bratiotis, a researcher in the field, who is working with the Task Force to help us identify next steps and intentions.

JFCS is also a member of the national Network of Hoarding Professionals (NHP). Through NHP, we have connected with agencies across the country working to address hoarding with whom we can discuss challenges in hoarding treatment, potential funding sources, and strategies for approaching hoarding through a mental health framework.

Other partnerships include Mutual Support Consulting, where we have worked with Lee Shuer for a number of years and are now jointly developing a training hoarding disorder intervention certification intended for peer supports; and Community Legal Services, which refers individuals who face legal challenges due to their hoarding disorder, such as those at risk of eviction.

- 5. Include a budget and actual for the project during the reporting period. What conversations have you had on how to sustain the project after the grant, and do you have plans to share your results with other organizations?**

JFCS continues to move forward in enrolling in Medicaid through Community Behavioral Health. We are currently waiting for Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Pennsylvania Department of Health Services (OMHSAS) to approve our enrollment. Once that occurs, we can then contract and begin getting reimbursed for individual and group work with those who have Medicaid and recover a portion of our costs. Our development team will also continue to apply for grants to support program operations. For the remainder of the current year, we have obtained support from Community Care Corp.

- 6. Feedback on your interactions with FFA would be helpful. How have we helped? Made it harder? What else can we do to facilitate your work?**

JFCS has greatly appreciated the ongoing support of the Friends Foundation for the Aging, and we hope to continue our work together addressing the needs of older adults in the future.