



BC ASSOCIATION OF

Community Response Networks

Stopping Adult Abuse and Neglect ... Together.

EXTREME CLUTTER IS A SYMPTOM

Individuals and families can follow the steps below to work on underlying issues. 4-6% of the general population have a disorder where extreme clutter happens.



Step 1: Get an assessment (ask a physician).

First step to understand what is going on and then figuring out a plan. Families and friends are often the help seekers.



Step 2: Find support groups and training for individuals and families.

Learn non-judgmental ways to interact with individuals with clutter problems.



Step 3: Seek mental health care.

Seek out coordinated help, specialized cognitive behavioural therapy, behavioural training, skills building, and/or peer support.



Step 4: Explore stress management options and other mental wellness supports.

In many cases (up to 75% of the time) other physical and mental health issues may be present. Sometimes proper medication can help with these.



Step 5: Contact professional organizers.

Professional organizers who may coordinate with other services could be helpful.

Learn more at www.bccrns.ca

We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of BC.



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COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO CLUTTER

At a certain point, individual clutter may pose a risk to the community, to immediate neighbours, or communal space and nearby properties.



Fire risks. Exits may be blocked, or heat sources covered by clutter and flammable material. Fire-fighters worry about prevention and risks to adjacent properties.



Health risks. Falls, lack of use of kitchen and poor nutrition, and inability to have home care are risks. Extreme clutter may be seen first by paramedics, or by hospital discharge inspections.



Coordinated response can provide:

- **Safety and harm reduction approaches.** Educating family, friends and public, and countering stigma about extreme clutter, providing support plans and monitoring.
- **Mental health care.** A coordinated intervention team may include mental health workers, fire, building inspector, environmental health, building managers to work together to reduce risks in the physical space and support individuals.
- **Encouragement in de-cluttering.** Negotiated or partially forced cleanup may occur but in a person centered care approach using best practices and involving the individual.



Results are not immediate. The goal of harm reduction (working on the priority risks) is to protect one's tenancy and to keep the individual and neighbours/community safe. Rural responses will be different than urban responses.

To learn more about extreme clutter, or services, talk to your local health authority or adult mental health services. You can also find information online at hoarding.iocdf.org or contact programs@bccrns.ca to book a presentation.

Learn more at www.bccrns.ca

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