



**MACQUARIE**  
University

## Macquarie University PURE Research Management System

---

This is the peer reviewed version of the following article:

Wootton, B. M., Worden, B. L., Norberg, M. M., Grisham, J. R., & Steketee, G. (2019). A clinician's quick guide to evidence-based approaches: hoarding disorder. *Clinical Psychologist*, 23(1), 85-87.

which has been published in final form at:

<https://doi.org/10.1111/cp.12176>

This article may be used for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Wiley Terms and Conditions for Use of Self-Archived Versions.

© 2019 The Australian Psychological Society. Published by Wiley.

A clinician's quick guide to evidence-based approaches: Hoarding disorder

Bethany M. Wootton <sup>1</sup>

Blaise L. Worden <sup>2</sup>

Melissa M. Norberg <sup>3</sup>

Jessica R. Grisham <sup>4</sup>

Gail Steketee <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Technology Sydney, Sydney, Australia

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Living, Hartford, CT, USA

<sup>3</sup> Centre for Emotional Health, Macquarie University

<sup>4</sup> UNSW Sydney, Sydney, Australia

<sup>5</sup> Boston University, Boston, MA, USA

*Corresponding author:* Bethany M. Wootton. Discipline of Psychology, Graduate School of Health. University of Technology Sydney. PO Box 123 Broadway, Ultimo, NSW 2007.

Australia. e. [bethany.wootton@uts.edu.au](mailto:bethany.wootton@uts.edu.au). p. +61 2 9514 3942.

## **Introduction**

Hoarding disorder (HD) is a new diagnostic category in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (DSM-5). The disorder is characterised by persistent difficulty discarding possessions due to a perceived need to save and/or distress associated with discarding, which results in significant clutter in the home (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

## **Existing treatment guidelines**

No treatment guidelines currently exist for HD.

## **Useful overview for clinicians**

- Mataix-Cols, D. (2014). Hoarding disorder. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 370(21), 2023-2030.

## **Evidence-based treatment manuals**

- Steketee, G. & Frost, R.O. (2014). *Compulsive hoarding and acquiring: Therapist guide*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

This manual has been shown to be effective in randomised controlled trials (RCTs) when delivered in both an individual (Steketee, Frost, Tolin, Rasmussen, & Brown, 2010) and group-based format (Muroff, Steketee, Bratnott, & Ross, 2012).

- Tolin, D. F., Worden, B., Wootton, B. M., & Gilliam, C. (2017). *CBT for Hoarding Disorder: A Group Therapy Program Therapist's Guide*. Wiley.

This group-based manual was effective in a recent RCT (Tolin et al., Submitted).

## **Self-help treatment manuals or books**

- Tolin, D. F., Frost, R. O., & Steketee, G. (2007). *Buried in treasures: Help for compulsive acquiring, saving, and hoarding*. New York: Oxford University Press.

This self-help manual was effective in a RCT when delivered in a support-group format facilitated by a non-health professional (Frost, Ruby, & Shuer, 2012).

### **Evidence-based online or remote treatments or supports**

Remote treatments for HD have not yet been investigated in RCTs, however two uncontrolled studies have examined online/remote treatments for HD, both with promising results. Muroff, Steketee, Himle, and Frost (2010) investigated a low-intensity remote internet-delivered program, and Muroff and Steketee (2018) investigated a high intensity remote internet-delivered videoconferencing treatment for HD using the abovementioned Steketee & Frost (2014) manual. The acceptability and efficacy of online or remote treatments for HD requires further research in controlled trials.

### **Assessment**

#### *Diagnostic Interviews*

- *Diagnostic Interview for Anxiety, Mood, and Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Neuropsychiatric Disorders* (DIAMOND; Tolin, Gilliam, Wootton, et al., 2018).
- Research version of the *Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-5* (SCID-5) (First, Williams, Karg, & Spitzer, 2015).
- *Structured Interview for Hoarding Disorder* (Nordsletten et al., 2013).

#### *Clinician-Administered and Self-Report Measures*

- *Hoarding Rating Scale (HRS)* (Tolin, Frost, & Steketee, 2010; Tolin, Gilliam, Davis, et al., 2018). This 5-item measure of HD severity can be clinician-administered or used as a self-report. A cut score of 11 indicates clinically significant hoarding symptoms on the clinician-administered version of the HRS (Tolin, Gilliam, Davis, et al., 2018).

- *Saving Inventory-Revised* (SI-R) (Frost, Steketee, & Grisham, 2004). A cut score of 41 on this 23-item self-report measure indicates clinically relevant HD symptoms (Tolin, Meunier, Frost, & Steketee, 2011).
- The *Clutter Image Rating Scale* (Frost, Steketee, Tolin, & Renaud, 2008) is a 9-item pictorial scale that portrays various levels of clutter within a living room, kitchen, and bedroom. It can be used as a clinician-administered or self-report scale. Rooms with a score of 4 or higher indicate substantial clutter (Frost et al., 2008).
- The *Saving Cognitions Inventory* (Steketee, Frost, & Kyrios, 2003) is a 24-item self-report measure of maladaptive cognitions thought to characterise HD.

### **Take home messages about treatment**

- Cognitive-behaviour therapy (CBT) is currently the most evidence based approach to treatment for HD.
- CBT for HD typically requires more sessions than CBT for other mental health conditions and most clients will need many more sessions than allotted through the Australian Government's Better Access to Mental Health Care Initiative.
- Treatment outcomes are generally maintained up to 12 months post-treatment (Muroff, Steketee, Frost, & Tolin, 2014).
- Even after current best-practice treatment, most individuals with HD will remain symptomatic (Tolin, Frost, Steketee, & Muroff, 2015) with significant clutter and functional impairment.
- The use of home visits or discarding in naturalistic (i.e., cluttered) environments may enhance clinical outcomes (Crone & Norberg, 2018; Tolin et al., 2015).
- Motivation will likely wax and wane during treatment and current evidence-based interventions emphasise the periodic use of motivational enhancement techniques.

- Dismantling studies are needed to enhance our understanding of the effective components of treatment.
- Insight will vary greatly across clients and many patients may be unwilling to participate in treatment.

### **New and emerging developments**

The following show promise in enhancing efficacy, reducing dropout, or improving dissemination of CBT for HD and require further research:

- Contingency management (Worden, Bowe, & Tolin, 2017).
- Between-session internet-based clinician support (Ivanov et al., 2018).
- Blended internet-based and face-to-face interventions (Fitzpatrick, Nedeljkovic, Abbott, Kyrios, & Moulding, 2018).
- Remotely delivered interventions (Muroff & Steketee, 2018).
- Peer-led support groups (Mathews et al., 2018).

## References

- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.): American Psychiatric Association.
- Crone, C., & Norberg, M. M. (2018). Scared and surrounded by clutter: The influence of emotional reactivity. *Journal of Affective Disorders, 235*, 285-292.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.04.066>
- First, M. B., Williams, J. B. W., Karg, R. S., & Spitzer, R. L. (2015). *Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-5 - Research Version*. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association.
- Fitzpatrick, M., Nedeljkovic, M., Abbott, J. A., Kyrios, M., & Moulding, R. (2018). “Blended” therapy: The development and pilot evaluation of an internet-facilitated cognitive behavioral intervention to supplement face-to-face therapy for hoarding disorder. *Internet Interventions, 12*, 16-25. doi:[10.1016/j.invent.2018.02.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.invent.2018.02.006)
- Frost, R. O., Ong, C., Steketee, G., & Tolin, D. F. (2016). Behavioral and emotional consequences of thought listing versus cognitive restructuring during discarding decisions in hoarding disorder. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 85*, 13-22.  
doi:[10.1016/j.brat.2016.08.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2016.08.003)
- Frost, R. O., Ruby, D., & Shuer, L. J. (2012). The buried in treasures workshop: Waitlist control trial of facilitated support groups for hoarding. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 50*(11), 661-667. doi:[10.1016/j.brat.2012.08.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2012.08.004)
- Frost, R. O., Steketee, G., & Grisham, J. (2004). Measurement of compulsive hoarding: Saving inventory-revised. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 42*(10), 1163-1182.  
doi:[10.1016/j.brat.2003.07.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2003.07.006)

- Frost, R. O., Steketee, G., Tolin, D. F., & Renaud, S. (2008). Development and validation of the clutter image rating. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, *30*(3), 193-203. doi:10.1007/s10862-007-9068-7
- Ivanov, V. Z., Enander, J., Mataix-Cols, D., Serlachius, E., Månsson, K. N. T., Andersson, G., . . . Rück, C. (2018). Enhancing group cognitive-behavioral therapy for hoarding disorder with between-session Internet-based clinician support: A feasibility study. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *74*(7), 1092-1105. doi:10.1002/jclp.22589
- Mathews, C. A., Mackin, R. S., Chou, C. Y., Uhm, S. Y., Bain, L. D., Stark, S. J., . . . Delucchi, K. (2018). Randomised clinical trial of community-based peer-led and psychologist-led group treatment for hoarding disorder. *BJPsych Open*, *4*(4), 285-293. doi:10.1192/bjo.2018.30
- Moulding, R., Nedeljkovic, M., Kyrios, M., Osborne, D., & Mogan, C. (2017). Short-Term Cognitive–Behavioural Group Treatment for Hoarding Disorder: A Naturalistic Treatment Outcome Study. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*, *24*(1), 235-244. doi:10.1002/cpp.2001
- Muroff, J., & Steketee, G. (2018). Pilot trial of cognitive and behavioral treatment for hoarding disorder delivered via webcam: Feasibility and preliminary outcomes. *Journal of Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders*, *18*, 18-24. doi:10.1016/j.jocrd.2018.05.002
- Muroff, J., Steketee, G., Bratiotis, C., & Ross, A. (2012). Group cognitive and behavioral therapy and bibliotherapy for hoarding: A pilot trial. *Depression and Anxiety*, *29*(7), 597-604. doi:10.1002/da.21923
- Muroff, J., Steketee, G., Frost, R. O., & Tolin, D. F. (2014). Cognitive behavior therapy for hoarding disorder: Follow-up findings and predictors of outcome. *Depression and Anxiety*, *31*(12), 964-971. doi:10.1002/da.22222



- Muroff, J., Steketee, G., Himle, J., & Frost, R. (2010). Delivery of internet treatment for compulsive hoarding (D.I.T.C.H.). *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 48(1), 79-85. doi:10.1016/j.brat.2009.09.006
- Muroff, J., Steketee, G., Rasmussen, J., Gibson, A., Bratnott, C., & Sorrentino, C. (2009). Group cognitive and behavioral treatment for compulsive hoarding: a preliminary trial. *Depression and Anxiety*, 26(7), 634-640. doi:10.1002/da.20591
- Nordsletten, A. E., Fernández de la Cruz, L., Pertusa, A., Reichenberg, A., Hatch, S. L., & Mataix-Cols, D. (2013). The Structured Interview for Hoarding Disorder (SIHD): Development, usage and further validation. *Journal of Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders*, 2(3), 346-350. doi:10.1016/j.jocrd.2013.06.003
- Steketee, G., Frost, R. O., & Kyrios, M. (2003). Cognitive aspects of compulsive hoarding. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 27(4), 463-479. doi:10.1023/A:1025428631552
- Steketee, G., Frost, R. O., Tolin, D. F., Rasmussen, J., & Brown, T. A. (2010). Waitlist-controlled trial of cognitive behavior therapy for hoarding disorder. *Depression and Anxiety*, 27(5), 476-484.
- Tolin, D. F., Frost, R. O., & Steketee, G. (2007). *Buried in treasures: Help for compulsive acquiring, saving, and hoarding*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tolin, D. F., Frost, R. O., & Steketee, G. (2010). A brief interview for assessing compulsive hoarding: The Hoarding Rating Scale-Interview. *Psychiatry Research*, 178(1), 147-152. doi:10.1016/j.psychres.2009.05.001
- Tolin, D. F., Frost, R. O., Steketee, G., & Muroff, J. (2015). Cognitive behavioral therapy for hoarding disorder: A meta-analysis. *Depression and Anxiety*, 32(3), 158-166. doi:10.1002/da.22327
- Tolin, D. F., Gilliam, C., Wootton, B. M., Bowe, W., Bragdon, L. B., Davis, E., . . . Hallion, L. S. (2018). Psychometric Properties of a Structured Diagnostic Interview for DSM-5

Anxiety, Mood, and Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders. *Assessment*, 25(1), 3-13. doi:10.1177/1073191116638410

Tolin, D. F., Gilliam, C. M., Davis, E., Springer, K., Levy, H. C., Frost, R. O., . . . Stevens, M. C. (2018). Psychometric properties of the Hoarding Rating Scale-Interview. *Journal of Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders*, 16, 76-80. doi:10.1016/j.jocrd.2018.01.003

Tolin, D. F., Meunier, S. A., Frost, R. O., & Steketee, G. (2011). Hoarding among patients seeking treatment for anxiety disorders. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 25(1), 43-48. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2010.08.001

Tolin, D. F., Wootton, B. M., Levy, H. C., Hallion, L. S., Worden, B. L., Diefenbach, G. J., . . . Stevens, M. C. (Submitted). Efficacy and mediators of a group cognitive-behavioural therapy for hoarding disorder.

Tolin, D. F., Worden, B., Wootton, B. M., & Gilliam, C. (2017). *CBT for Hoarding Disorder: A Group Therapy Program Therapist's Guide.*: Wiley.

Worden, B. L., Bowe, W. M., & Tolin, D. F. (2017). An open trial of cognitive behavioral therapy with contingency management for hoarding disorder. *Journal of Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders*, 12, 78-86. doi:10.1016/j.jocrd.2016.12.005