

Jewish Family Service receives over \$30,000 grant to address hoarding in the community

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METRO DETROIT — Jewish Family Service of Metro Detroit has been awarded a grant of around \$35,000 from the Natan Fund's Confronting Poverty Initiative, in partnership with The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, to support community members from low-income households who are struggling with hoarding disorders.

The non-sectarian, nonprofit social service agency has offices in Oak Park and West Bloomfield, and supports members of the community in need through an array of programs that cover older adult services, mental health and wellness, and safety net services, among many other services, including aiding those who need support due to potential hoarding disorders.



(<https://www.candgnews.com/admin/articles/temp-image/8af618dd3ab5e3eefba47b3432b1e011.jpeg>)
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A hoarding disorder refers to those who may find difficulty parting with or getting rid of possessions out of a need to save the items, which can cause the items to pile up in a way that affects how people are able to use their living spaces. Hoarding can be associated with mental health issues that potentially can come from loss or some sort of trauma that has happened in their lives.

"Some may have a fear of coming forward and asking for help or might be afraid of someone throwing away their stuff while they are away from home," Director of Geriatric Care Management Barb Haddad said. "They don't want others to judge them."

JFS has resources available for those in need once they are ready to address their respective issues.

"Hoarding is a multifaceted issue, and we want to provide wraparound treatment that respects the dignity of the person being served," said Dini Peterson, a licensed master social worker and the chief program officer for mental health and safety net services. "This generous grant will allow us to equip our team with the necessary tools to support this growing issue, as well as improve quality of life for those community members who couldn't otherwise afford to get help."

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After seeing an increase in clients, JFS applied for the grant in order to continue to help clients through assessing the safety and stability of their homes and providing financial assistance to cover counseling services as well as professional cleaners and organizers.

“Last year, we worked with around 10 clients who were dealing with hoarding issues, which is an uptick from the previous year,” JFS Communications Manager Debbie Feit said. “It was enough of a jump that we felt a need to respond.”

The grant would also cover training for 40 staff members in the agency’s geriatric care management, behavioral health, and family support services in order to recognize hoarding behaviors.

“We want our staff to have a basic understanding of what hoarding is and what could be causing this, and be able to look for the symptoms, engage with people and help with potential financial barriers,” Haddad said. “We’re hoping that by building clients’ comfort and educating them, we can help clients begin the process of therapy or joining a group for support.”

For more information, visit jfsdetroit.org (<http://jfsdetroit.org>) or call (248) 592-2300 for the JFS West Bloomfield Office or the Oak Park Office. Those in need of assistance or who know someone who may need assistance can call (248) 592-2313.



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