

# A SLICE OF PIE

**PIE is all about relationships....A Psychologically Informed Environment is a place or service that has been purposefully designed to support the mental, emotional, relational, learning and social needs of both service users and staff.**



## **PIE Group and Trauma-Informed Group are joining forces!**

The PIE Group and Trauma-Informed Group have decided to join forces to create a new super group. Previously they have ran separate and parallel to one another while both were focussed on similar issues on how to ensure we provide compassionate and supportive relationships.

***Our new name is Tic Tap Pie (Trauma Informed Care, Triple Aims Project & Psychological Informed Environment).***

We are always happy to welcome new people (staff and residents) to join. Our aims is to enable all to have say in change ideas and how we can improve our offer to staff and clients. So if you are currently living at a PRHA building or are a staff member and want to know more, please speak to one of the managers were you live/work.

***Stewart McPhillips***  
***Business Development Manager***



## De-Escalation

**Whether at work or at home, you might deal with angry, hostile, or noncompliant behaviour every day. Your response to defensive behaviour is often the key to avoiding a physical confrontation with someone who has lost control of their behaviour.**

**These 10 De-Escalation Tips will help you respond to difficult behaviours in the safest, most effective way possible.**

### **TIP 1**

#### **Be empathic and non-judgmental.**

When someone says or does something you perceive as weird or irrational, try not to judge or discount their feelings. Whether or not you think those feelings are justified, they're real to the other person. Pay attention to them.

***Keep in mind that whatever the person is going through, it may be the most important thing in their life at the moment.***

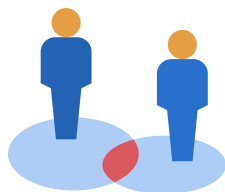


### **TIP 2**

#### **Respect personal space.**

If possible, stand half to one metre away from a person who's escalating. Allowing personal space tends to decrease a person's anxiety and can help you prevent acting-out behaviour.

***If you must enter someone's personal space to provide care, explain your actions so the person feels less confused and frightened.***



### **TIP 3**

#### **Use non-threatening non-verbal's.**

The more a person loses control, the less they hear your words—and the more they react to your non-verbal communication. Be mindful of your gestures, facial expressions, movements, and tone of voice.

***Keeping your tone and body language neutral will go a long way toward defusing a situation.***



### **TIP 4**

#### **Avoid overreacting.**

Remain calm, rational, and professional. While you can't control the person's behaviour, how you respond to their behaviour will have a direct effect on whether the situation escalates or defuses.

***Positive thoughts like "I can handle this" and "I know what to do" will help you maintain your own rationality and calm the person down.***



### **TIP 5**

#### **Focus on feelings.**

Facts are important, but how a person feels is the heart of the matter. Yet some people have trouble identifying how they feel about what's happening to them. Watch and listen carefully for the person's real message.

**Try saying something like "That must be scary." Supportive words like these will let the person know that you understand what's happening—and you may get a positive response.**



## De-Escalation

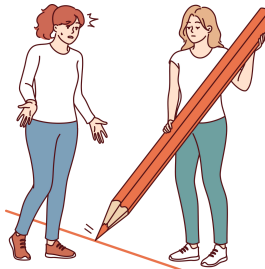


### **TIP 6**

#### **Ignore challenging questions.**

Answering challenging questions often results in a power struggle. When a person challenges your authority, redirect their attention to the issue at hand.

***Ignore the challenge, but not the person. Bring their focus back to how you can work together to solve the problem.***



### **TIP 7**

#### **Set limits.**

If a person's behaviour is belligerent, defensive, or disruptive, give them clear, simple, and enforceable limits. Offer concise and respectful choices and consequences.

***A person who's upset may not be able to focus on everything you say. Be clear, speak simply, and offer the positive choice first.***

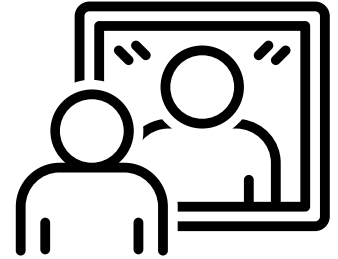


### **TIP 8**

#### **Choose wisely what you insist upon**

It's important to be thoughtful in deciding which rules are negotiable and which are not. For example, if a person doesn't want to shower in the morning, can you allow them to choose the time of day that feels best for them?

***If you can offer a person options and flexibility, you may be able to avoid unnecessary altercations.***



### **TIP 9**

#### **Allow silence for reflection.**

We've all experienced awkward silences. While it may seem counterintuitive to let moments of silence occur, sometimes it's the best choice. It can give a person a chance to reflect on what's happening, and how he or she needs to proceed.

***Believe it or not, silence can be a powerful communication tool.***



### **TIP 10**

#### **Allow time for decisions.**

When a person is upset, they may not be able to think clearly. Give them a few moments to think through what you've said.

***A person's stress rises when they feel rushed. Allowing time brings calm.***

**Mary Kneafsey**

**Assistant Director Client Services**

## Hoarding Working Group

### What is Hoarding?

Hoarding is when someone has a large amount of possessions that they have difficulty getting rid of, even if they seemingly have no "value". Someone who hoards may feel that they need to save items, in case they might need it one day, or if it reminds them of someone they lost.

There is usually a great deal of distress caused if items have to be removed. For some people, removing items can feel like losing a person.

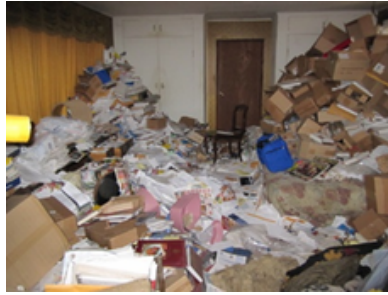
### Why do people hoard?

There is no one reason why people hoard and, for some, there may be lots of reasons. Some explanations might be; feeling low, growing up without much money or items, difficulties with planning and organisation skills, and/or loneliness. People often feel like they have an emotional 'attachment' to the item, so it may feel like a friend or something that is protecting them.

### When does hoarding become a problem?

Someone who hoards may not find their hoarding a problem, however people around them might. This is usually when clutter makes things difficult, such as using a kitchen or blocking doors. Clutter might also damage relationships. For example, if someone tries to clear the clutter, the person who hoards might become upset with them and feel like they can no longer be trusted.

If someone who hoards lives in shared homeless accommodation, there may be problems if other residents make a complaint or if there are pest infestations. This can be difficult for the person who hoards and their relationship with other residents and staff.



### What is being done about hoarding in Tower Hamlets?

We have started a Hoarding Working Group since November 2023. This group was set up with different services in the Tower Hamlets Borough, and is led by the Psychology in Hostels team from East London NHS Foundation Trust. Our overall goal is to come together to try to understand the needs of people who hoard better and improve how we work together.

The different teams currently involved include:

- Accommodation providers such as hostels
- The local council, including safeguarding and environmental health teams
- Mental health professionals
- Emergency service workers such as the fire brigade
- Social care
- Commissioning

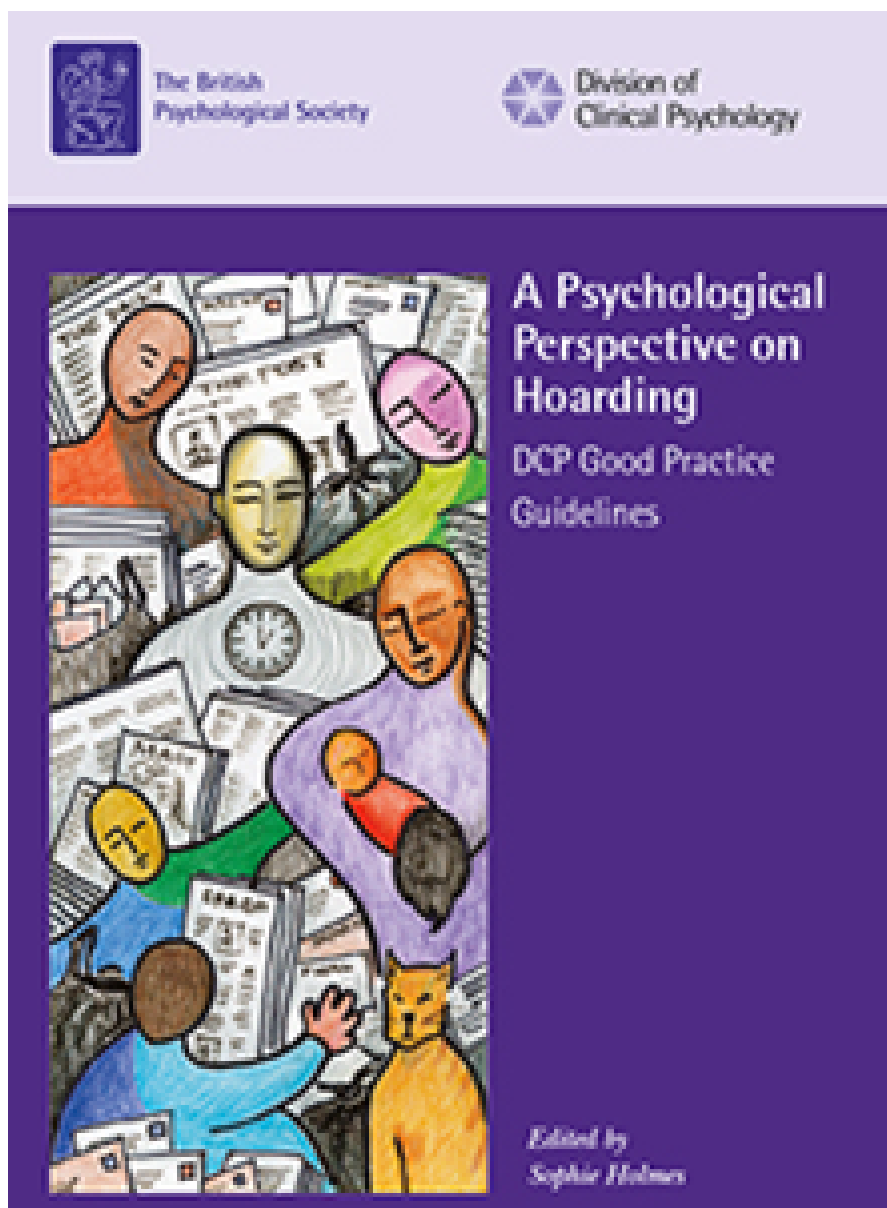
Most importantly, we want individuals and people around them who are or have experienced hoarding to join in with the project. We are keen for those interested to be a part of this project, which might involve coming along to meetings or sharing their story. You can be as involved as much as you like.

**If you would be interested in helping to improve how we work with hoarding, please do get in touch with our team or speak to your hostel managers.**

***Michelle Youngs, Senior Assistant Psychologist  
Lucy Desborough, Trainee Clinical Psychologist  
Psychology in Hostels Team***

## Hoarding resources:

- Hoarding UK - <https://hoardinguk.org/> oOnline resources; support groups.
- Hoarding Disorders UK - <https://hoardingdisordersuk.org/support/online> or telephone support groups; information.
- Please speak to your key worker and/or your GP if you would like support with your mental health.
- [A Psychological Perspective on Hoarding\\_|\\_BPS](#)





# How does our garden grow? Using quality improvement we hear you say ☺

Anna, Aziz, Simon Harold, Lindsay Johnson, Mary Kneafsey, Sophie Lemon, Nikki Motohashi, Nathan, Louise Noronha, Ché Rosebert, Richard St. Paul & Michelle Youngs  
Psychology in Hostels Team and Providence Row Housing Association



## Introduction

People sleeping rough in Tower Hamlets are publicly very visible and numbers are rising fast. Shockingly their median age of death is 61 years compared to 80 years in the general population. In 2018 an ELFT stakeholder event made improving health outcomes for homeless people a priority.

ELFT had developed a Quality Improvement (QI) methodology to work with whole populations, called Triple Aims. This Triple Aims method centres co-production as key for success and sustainability. A steering group formed of



people with lived experience of homelessness, Commissioners, PRHA and ELFT Directors. So, on fertile ground the Triple Aims Project to improve the health of homeless people in hostels began to take root.



## Aims

In two Hostels create a sustainable project working group of residents & staff who lead on service improvements that improve the physical, mental and social health and wellbeing of both residents and staff.

## Method

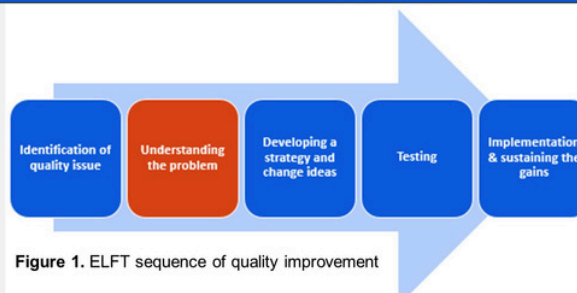


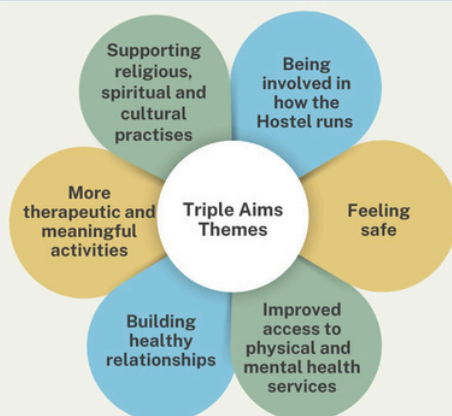
Figure 1. ELFT sequence of quality improvement

ELFT provided QI and Trauma Informed training. Open questions were asked about assets, strengths and needs. Residents quickly told us that it was friendlier to call interviews conversations. The themes from conversations were made into a video and presented back at workshops and one to one sessions as needed.

Multiple change ideas were generated, prioritised and implemented using a Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle.



## Results & Change Ideas



A co-produced co-production policy was written. Hostel Staff were given access to CHAIN data that records information about people who have slept rough.



Figure 2. Diagram with key themes generated from conversations

London Borough of Tower Hamlets Public Health funded a third project in a Hostel to improve trauma informed approaches.

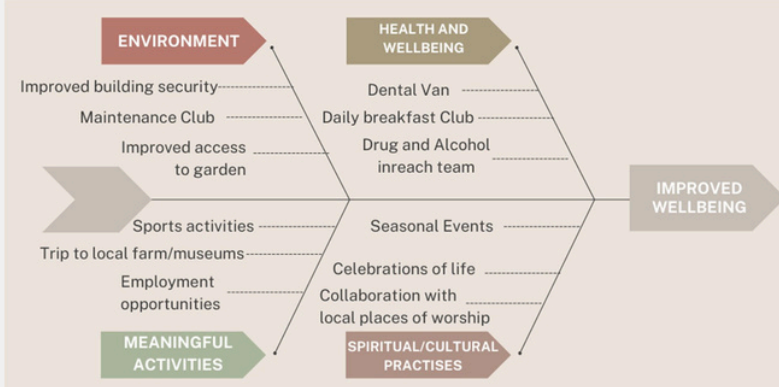


Figure 3. Fish Bone diagram with examples of change ideas generated from the triple aims project. Some change ideas did not take root, such as a weekly connections café that aimed to increase opportunities to socialise. However, the model encourages adaption and a daily Breakfast Club that was established instead has been very successful.

"Triple Aims is important, it keeps the Hostel clientele upbeat & positive. I use my skills as a Chef at many of the events. I stay involved as I want to make life easier for others. Other Hostels should not think twice and give it a go" Richard

"I got involved because I wanted to know about what was going on in the hostel. I feel respected, helps my mental health. I started the Newsletter and then I started volunteering in a local City Farm and now have paid work there too." Anna

"I keep involved because of the fact that it's a chance for me to voice opinions or concerns to improve life. Knowing that the residents' voices are being heard when changes are being made after the meetings" Nathan



Figure 4. Example of the resident led Triple Aims Newsletter

## Lessons Learnt

- Ask residents to be involved as soon as they arrive in the Hostel.
- Ensure project meetings happen regularly and reliably.
- If needed, support residents to actively participate by meeting before and after meetings and help them plan what they want to say and do.
- Communication is key – the resident led Newsletter shows other residents that their involvement is valued.
- Keep going, if one idea doesn't work out, adapt it or move onto the next idea.
- Once one or two ideas take root, more residents and outside people and agencies become involved building a positive cycle of change.



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**We are always looking articles and photos  
for the Bulletin.**

Please email your contributions to:  
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