

**Guidance Questions for Practitioners**

**Listed below are examples of questions to ask where you are concerned about**

**someone’s safety in their own home, where you suspect a risk of self- neglect and hoarding.**

**The information gained from these questions will inform the referral process and provide the information needed to alert other agencies. Most individuals with a hoarding problem will be embarrassed about their surroundings so adapt the question to suit the individual**

* **How do you get in and out of your property, do you feel safe living here?**
* **Have you ever had an accident, slipped, tripped up or fallen? How did it happen?**
* **How have you made your home safer to prevent this (above) from happening**
* **again?**
* **How do move safely around your home ( where the floor is uneven or covered,**

**or there are exposed wires, damp, rot, or other hazards)**

* **Has a fire ever started by accident?**
* **How do you get hot water, lighting, heating in here? Do these services work**
* **properly? Have they ever been tested?**
* **Do you ever use candles or an open flame to heat and light here or cook with**
* **camping gas?**
* **How do you manage to keep yourself warm? Especially in winter?**
* **When did you last go out in your garden? Do you feel safe to go out there?**
* **Are you worried about other people getting into your garden to try and break-in?**
* **Has this ever happened?**
* **Are you worried about mice, rats or foxes, or other pests? Do you leave food out**

**for them?**

* **Have you ever seen mice or rats in your home? Have they eaten any of your food? Or got upstairs and be nesting anywhere?**
* **Can you prepare food, cook and wash up in your kitchen?**
* **Do you use your fridge? Can I have look in it? How do you keep things cold in the hot weather?**
* **How do you keep yourself clean? Can I see your bathroom? Are you able to use your bathroom and use the toilet ok? Have a wash, bath? Shower?**
* **Can you show me where you and your children (if relevant) sleep and let me see your upstairs rooms? Are the stairs safe to walk up? ( if there are any)**
* **What do you do with your dirty washing?**
* **Where do you sleep? Are you able to change your bed linen regularly? When did**
* **you last change them?**
* **How do you keep yourself warm at night? Have you got extra coverings to put on your bed if you are cold?**
* **Are there any broken windows in your home? Any repairs that need to be done?**
* **Because of the number of possessions you have, do you find it difficult to use**
* **some of your rooms? If so which ones?**
* **Do you struggle with discarding things or to what extent do you have difficulty discarding (or recycling, selling, giving away) ordinary things that other people**

**would get rid of?**

**Guidance for Practitioners**

**Hoarding Insight characteristics**

**Use this guide as a baseline to describe the person’s attitude towards their hoarding. Provide additional information in your referrals and reports to enable a tailored approach that is relevant to the individual.**

**Good or fair insight:**

**The person recognises that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are problematic. The person recognises these behaviours in themselves.**

**Poor insight:**

**The person is mostly convinced that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are not problematic despite evidence to the contrary. The person might recognise a storage problem but has little self-recognition or acceptance of their own hoarding behaviour.**

**Absent (delusional) insight:**

**The person is convinced that hoarding-related beliefs and behaviours (relating to difficulty discarding items, clutter or excessive acquisition) are not problematic despite evidence to the contrary. The person is completely excepting of their living environment despite it being hoarded and possibly a risk to health.**

**Detached with assigned blame:**

**The person has been away from their property for an extended period. The person has formed a detachment from the hoarded property and is now convinced a 3rd party is to blame for the condition of the property. For example a burglary has taken place, squatters or other household members**