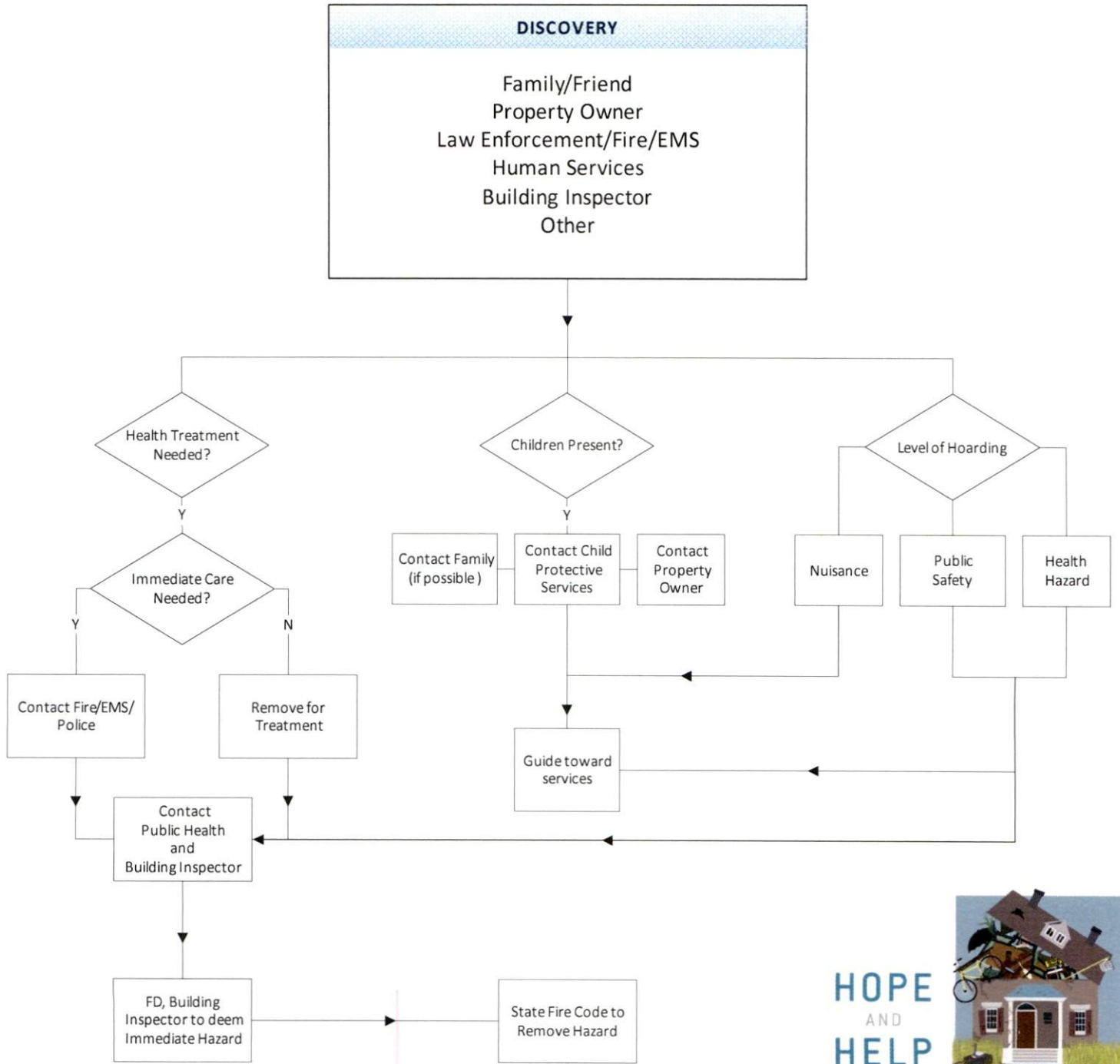


Dane County Hoarding Task Force Road Map



Facts about Hoarding Disorder (HD)

What is Hoarding?	Why does it happen?	When is it unsafe?	How do I talk to someone about it?	Where is help?
Hoarding Disorder (HD) is different from clutter or chronic disorganization. It is a diagnosable mental disorder where there is impairment and significant distress.	HD occurs in 3-5% of the population, affects women more often than men and in ALL socioeconomic classes.	A space that is hoarded can be unsafe due to obstructed pathways, blocked exits; structural neglect; plumbing, electrical, appliances not working	People with mental health disorders in general experience a great deal of stigma already. It is most effective to acknowledge that the person has probably experienced trauma. Be objective about the situation and put your judgments aside.	A number of agencies can assist with treatment and intervention but most are voluntary. See reverse side for a list of providers. In severe cases, Law Enforcement, Fire/Rescue, Public Health or Building Inspection may be involved.
Additional symptoms of HD: A person acquires excessive amounts of stuff/things	Persons with HD have often experienced significant trauma in their lives	Risks of falls or items falling	Listen to the person respectfully and non-judgmentally while also being direct and honest about what you see.	Community support programs such as Adult/Elder Services, professional organizers, support groups, therapists and other resources
A person has difficulty discarding possessions because of a perceived need to save them	Major Depressive Disorder co-occurs most commonly with HD.	Health risks from mold, dust, rotten food, human and or animal waste accumulation	Use the person as the expert on what can help them get better; ask what has worked in the past and help support them in being the decision maker.	Have success with people who have trust-based relationships. Long-term and ongoing support is necessary to prevent and treat relapses.
Spaces can no longer be used for their intended purpose	People with HD often don't take care of their medical and financial needs and are at higher risk of eviction.		Throwing things away reinforces the trauma the person has already lived. Recovery from HD is slow-going and requires patience.	An Internet search using key terms like 'hoarding disorder' and 'treatment for HD' will reveal several local and national resources.