

Summary of Bed Bug Navigator Role

Bed bugs have the most detrimental effect on those living with low income, poor social supports, little education, unemployment, inadequate housing, and poor home management. Bed bugs make every aspect of living conditions worse.

The Bed Bug Navigator (BBN) position was developed to assist vulnerable Hamilton residents living with bed bugs. In the first year, the BBN assisted 52 clients. The BBN position required more time and effort than what was originally anticipated (see Table 1).

Recommendations:

Develop a Bed Bug team that will provide the following services:

1. **Early intervention** in the form of a rapid response team to assist clients in reducing the number of bedbugs. This team would help to prepare the client for prep work and treatment, as well as unpacking and returning apartments back to normal. When bedbug infestations are allowed to become severe, the problem most often persists, even with the best integrated pest management.
2. Ensure appropriate assistance through service to prevent and respond to bed bugs. **Assistance** with home cleaning, clutter removal and home organization for those who cannot do these tasks themselves. Help preparing for and unpacking after bed bug treatment. Assistance in ongoing monitoring for bedbugs.

Table 1. Comparison of proposed and actual job requirement

	Initial Job Description	Additional Job Requirements
Knowledge, Skills and Job Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively with a vulnerable group • Identify priority issues for citizens • Act as a liaison between the client and agencies • Provide timely referrals to agencies • Identify gaps in services and explore solutions to gaps; provide input and feedback • Enhance client self-management and quality of care through health/prevention information, knowledge exchange, resources and services • Case follow up • Provide cost effective client-centered care • Travel within the community • Maintain working knowledge of current resources available to clients • Report to the PHS Director • Provide input at planning committees and to the Bed Bug Pilot Project Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a mediator between the client and superintendents/ landlords • Advocate for client needs (e.g. purchase of mattress encasements) • Assist clients in planning for the disruption of prep and treatment of their homes • Provide emotional support to reduce stigma isolation and shame; assist with stress management and provide coping strategies • Provide practical support (e.g. assist in obtaining vacuums, beds, totes, and furniture, apply mattress encasements, set up glue traps, unpack items after treatment) • Act as a resource for Public Health and other agency staff and clients for bed bug issues