

## **"Moving to a new house in Nunavik and Nunavut: assessing the associations between changes in housing conditions and improvement in mental health"**

Oral presentation résumé

**Introduction:** In 2014-2015, investments in social housing permitted the construction of more than 400 new social housing units in Nunavut and Nunavik. The objective of this study is to identify changes in housing conditions with the potential to improve mental health among Inuit adults.

**Methods:** In collaboration with Inuit organizations, a pre-post study was conducted, without control group, to which 102 Inuit adults participated. People ranked at the top of the waitlist for social housing were recruited by local housing officers. Indicators were measured 1-6 months before moving, and 15-18 after: crowding (number of people per room), housing quality (number of problems with the house), sense of home (score), and psychological distress (Kessler 6-item score). Associations between changes in all indicators, adjusting for individuals' covariates, were estimated using multilevel linear regression models.

**Results:** Decrease in crowding was not directly linked to improvement in psychological distress, but was significantly associated with increase in sense of home ( $p=0.015$ ), which in turn was associated with decrease in psychological distress ( $p=0.009$ ). Improvements in housing quality was significantly associated with both increase in sense of home ( $p=0.015$ ), and decrease in psychological distress ( $p=0.003$ ).

**Conclusions:** Our results suggest that improvements in crowding and housing quality have the potential to improve mental health among Inuit adults living in Nunavut and Nunavik, although for crowding the effect seems to transit through increases in 'sense of home'. Partner organizations intend to use these results to inform housing and public health strategies."

Source: <https://www.santepop.gc.ca/en/node/2737>

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