

# *Participant Perspectives on Housing First and Recovery: Early Findings from the At Home/Chez Soi Project*

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# Introduction

- Context: *At Home/Chez Soi*: federally funded, mixed methods RCT evaluating *Housing First* in five Canadian cities
- Aim: To better understand how receiving housing prior to treatment impacts engagement and envisioned recovery for previously homeless individuals with mental illness

# Methods

- Semi-structured interviews with recently housed participants within the five research sites (n=27)
- Analysis of early findings
- Constant comparative method leading to theme identification

# Results

- **Housing- Reclaiming Identity/A Different Future**

- Majority of participants
- Housing viewed as an opportunity to “get back on track”
- *“Housing gives me the freedom to work on myself and get my life back together”*

- **Demoralization, Adjustment Problems, and Social Isolation**

- Subgroup of participants
- Continued struggles with addiction and trauma
- Adjustment difficulties associated with housing
- *“I don’t know how to feel about (being housed)...it’s been a long time since I’ve been indoors.”*

# Conclusions

- Housing- central to recovery for most HF participants
- Choice of housing facilitated autonomy and the ability to focus on the future and one's recovery
- Implications: Important to explore how participants envision the role of housing in their lives to identify those who require early attention and support