Author's response to reviews

Title: Mutations in APC, CTNNB1 and K-ras genes and expression of hMLH1 in sporadic colorectal carcinomas from the Netherlands Cohort Study

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Dear Sir, Madam,

We are pleased with the acceptance for publication in BMC Cancer. Upon review of the uploaded manuscript, we believe we have complied with the formatting checklist.

In response to reviewer 2’s comment on immunohistochemistry as an alternative for sequencing, we would like to argue that in our study this does not offer a suitable alternative. Immunohistochemistry for the C-terminal part of APC that shows loss of signal would lead to the conclusion of a truncation of the APC protein. However, this needs to be confirmed by parallel staining of the N-terminal domain of APC as there may be various reasons for absence of a signal of the C-terminal part of APC, among which poor quality of the formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded tumour tissue. Available antibodies against the N-terminal part of APC are not reactive in paraffin-embedded tissues, and as fresh tissue is not available, the appropriate immunohistochemistry cannot be carried out.

Yours sincerely,

Margreet Luchtenborg