Author's response to reviews

**Title:** A prospective cohort study of health behavior profiles after age 50 and mortality risk

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**Version:** 4  **Date:** 22 August 2012

**Author's response to reviews:** see over
August 22, 2012

Dr. Anne Taylor
Associate Editor
BioMed Central Public Health

Dear Dr. Taylor:

Thank you for your latest review of our manuscript, “A prospective cohort study of health behavior profiles after age 50 and mortality risk” (MS: 8040391556522686). Attached you will find a newly revised version of the manuscript.

Referee 2’s only remaining comment is a recommendation to include in our manuscript one further study limitation. In particular, he states that we should acknowledge that health behaviors in this study were assessed at just one point in time, 10 years prior to the end of our follow-up period. As such, we were not able to capture behavior changes that took place over time.

We are aware of this limitation, and we thank this reviewer for encouraging us to acknowledge it in our manuscript. The revised manuscript now includes a statement about the limitations imposed by using behaviors from baseline only (see page 18, paragraph 1). At the same time, we state that associations between behavior changes and mortality risk can be difficult to interpret, but also point out that this is an area in need of further research.

By addressing this issue, we hope that we have adequately addressed this reviewer’s remaining concern. Once again, we thank everyone involved in the review process, and look forward to receiving your response to this revision.

Sincerely,

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