Author's response to reviews

Title: Arsenic in drinking water and cerebrovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, and kidney disease in Michigan: a standardized mortality ratio analysis

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Drs. Grandjean and Ozonoff,

Thank you for your efforts in overseeing the peer-review process for our manuscript, “Arsenic in drinking water and cerebrovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, and kidney disease in Michigan: a standardized mortality ratio analysis”. My co-authors and I have revised the manuscript in accordance with the reviewer’s comments. On behalf of the authors, I pledge that there are no conflicts of interest and that this material has not been published in, or submitted to another journal. All authors have read the manuscript, agree that the work is ready for publication, and accept responsibility for the manuscript's contents. This study received support from grant R01 CA96002-10 from the US National Cancer Institute.

As requested, we added a section to the discussion to highlight the potential synergy between arsenic and smoking in Genesee County. From p. 15: “In light of the attention given to arsenic and cancer [3-7], the lack of findings in our study of significantly elevated mortality rates for cancers of the bladder, kidney, lung, and skin is intriguing. The SMR for lung cancer was elevated in Genesee County, but depressed in the other five counties. This may be due to a possible synergism between arsenic and smoking [51], as Genesee is the most urban county, presumably with the highest smoking rates [41-43]. An alternative explanation for the lack of strong cancer-related findings may be that…”

Also, as requested, we removed any spacing between sections, removed spacing between each reference, updated the references that were in press—they have now been published, checked formatting of all references, and added a black line border around each cell in all of the tables.

Attached is an electronic copy of the revised manuscript. We believe the paper to be substantially improved as a result of the reviewers’ comments and appreciate the opportunity to publish our work in Environmental Health.

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Respectfully,

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