Author’s response to reviews

Title: Risk of colorectal cancer among immigrants to Ontario, Canada

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Letter to the editors of BMC Gastroenterology regarding manuscript BMGE-D-17-00111 (Risk of colorectal cancer among immigrants to Ontario, Canada by Paszat et al)

Dear editors

I thank you for the reviews of this manuscript.

Regarding the comments by Reviewer 1, the additional value of this study is now clearly outlined in the discussion section beginning on page 11 line 17 of the track-changes version. While there are no data on obesity, diet and lifestyle, this lacuna is unlikely to change the direction of the hazard ratios for these large cohorts of immigrants from regions around the world or from the 14 countries of birth comprising the majority of the immigrants.

Regarding the comments by Reviewer 2:

Reviewer 2, comment 1. The goal of the work has been restated more clearly in the background section, page 4, lines 15 - 18 in the track changes version, and in the discussion section, page 11 lines 12 - 13 we concisely state, with a reference, that it is already known that immigrants to Ontario are less likely to participate in CRC screening compared to non-immigrants.
Reviewer 2, comment 2. As we mention in the discussion section, page 12 lines 16 - 19, the CRC screening program was introduced at the end of the observation period so we are unable to comment on any association between immigration, screening, and the risk of CRC.

Reviewer 3, comment 3. We have taken this comment about the discussion section very seriously, and it has been entirely rewritten.

Reviewer 4, comment 4. We agree that the discussion about British Columbia data was inappropriate and confusing. In the completely rewritten discussion section, we simply cite it as an example of a study of a small sample for which time-to-event analyses were impossible (Discussion section, page 12, lines 5 and 6).

Reviewer 4, comment 5. Although the paper is now somewhat longer, we have followed the advice of Reviewer 2. The data from 2 of the figures have been added to Table 3, so that only 2 figures are now included.

Reviewer 4, 'small points' The entire background section has been extensively rewritten to improve clarity and the errors, spaces, and typos have been corrected as instructed.