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Title	Design, methods and demographics from phase I of Alberta's Tomorrow Project cohort: a prospective cohort profile
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Reviewer 1	Dr. Jean-Pierre Pellerin
Institution	Centre Hospitalier de Verdun, Unité de médecine familiale
General comments (author response in bold)	<p>This is an article that shows a methodological structure in order to create a useful bank of data to describe the main factors that influence cancer and chronic diseases.</p> <p>The four goals of the paper are well exposed and answered. The usefulness of this type of work is pointed. The research received ethics approbation.</p> <p>The procedures to validate the main data are precisely described, as procedures to clean data and compare them. Analysis seems to be well performed, taking into account of the variables continuous (mean and s) and categorical distribution (% and s). Chi square test were used to compare ATP cohort and CCHS Survey.</p> <p>In a data collection of this size, it is amazing to see 99% of responders consent to link their data to the administrative database. There is almost no missing value. The authors have succeeded to demonstrate to the population that their work is serious and important for the collectivity and improvement in health services.</p> <p>Discrepancies between ATP cohort result and Surveys are somewhat important for some variables but there is no surprise in this. A survey tends to be more imprecise and shows more variable results compare to an extensive collection of data. The limitations observed in the interpretation are logically responded.</p> <p>This work should be interesting for people working in public health.</p> <p>We thank the reviewer for his very supportive and encouraging comments, and appreciation for the effort put into minimizing missing values.</p>
Reviewer 2	Dr. Richard Birtwhistle
Institution	Queen's University, Family Medicine and Public Health Sciences, Kingston, Ont.
General comments (author response in bold)	<p>This paper describes the development and initial demographic information about the respondents from the Alberta Tomorrow Project cohort. This cohort recruitment began in 2001 and continued to 2009. The development of the cohort was carefully planned and executed and should prove to be a valuable resource to understanding the risk factors for disease development in Alberta. The authors' have described the methods used, the type of data collected and the limitations to the use of longitudinal population cohorts in research. The paper goes into too much detail about the methods and initial demographics of the cohort.</p> <p>We thank the reviewer for his comments and suggestions. While very detailed, it is our intention that this paper will serve as the source paper for researchers interested in utilizing our database for future research studies, as well as to support the description of recruitment methods in future publications. However, we have attempted to reduce some of the detail, and have dropped the word count from 3900 words to under 3000. We hope that this makes the description more streamlined.</p> <p>Although well done there is very little new in the description. Some interesting information would be how the data is stored and secured, who has access for use, how a researcher gets access to the data and the costs of establishing and maintaining this cohort.</p> <p>We thank the reviewer for his insightful comments. As indicated above, the primary purpose of this paper is to provide a cohort profile and description of participant recruitment and data collection. As such, presentation of analyzed data and new information is limited to within the scope of the cohort profile. The reviewer brings up interesting and important points related to</p>

the next "phase" of ATP - that being how this database will now be utilized. Detailed information on data access is provided on our new website (www.myATP.ca), and is described in a special section called How To Access The Data, located after the interpretation section. The specifics around data storage and security evolve constantly in order to keep pace with privacy and security advancements/legislation as well as technology and available delivery mechanisms. In this regard, we feel that these aspects are best characterized on our website in a real-time format, such that researchers (as well as our participants) can access up-to-date information about these procedures. And finally, a financial analysis is definitely a worthwhile endeavour, and the real costs of establishing and maintaining a cohort of this size and depth should not be under-appreciated. However, we feel that this analysis is out of the scope of the present paper, but may be an important topic that we hope to present in the future, potentially when we are further along in the "utilization" phase and can include estimates on return of investment based on research outputs and outreach.

I am also curious why there are not some results already published given the cohort has been formed for a long time.

The reviewer is quite right, and we apologize for the perception that this is the first paper arising from this cohort. In actuality, as the resource has been built there have been several cross-sectional papers that have been published, however the scope of the present manuscript limited the extent to which we could describe these papers. The following references (while not exhaustive) are provided for interest, and as examples of how the ATP dataset has been utilized to date:

2015 - Nicholas JA, Lo Siou G, Lynch EM, Robson PJ, Friedenreich CM, Csizmadia I. Leisure-time physical activity does not attenuate the association between occupational sedentary behaviour and obesity: Results from the Tomorrow Project in Alberta, Canada. *J Phys Act Health* 2015 Apr 1 [epub ahead of print]; PMID 25830327

2014 - Csizmadia I, Neilson HK, Kopciuk KA, Khandwala F, Liu A, Friedenreich CM, Yasui Y, Rabasa-Lhoret R, Bryant HE, Lau DC & Robson PJ. The Sedentary Time and Activity Reporting Questionnaire (STAR-Q): reliability and validity against doubly labelled water and 7-day activity diaries. *Am J Epidemiol* 180(4):424-35; PMID 25038920

2014 - Csizmadia I, Kelemen LE, Speidel T, Yuan Y, Dale LC, Friedenreich CM & Robson PJ. Are physical activity levels linked to nutrient adequacy? Implications for cancer risk. *Nutr Cancer* 66(2):214-24; PMID 24564401

2012 - Aparicio-Ting FE, Friedenreich CM, Kopciuk KA, Plotnikoff RC & Bryant HE. Prevalence of meeting physical activity guidelines for cancer prevention in Alberta. *Chronic Dis Inj Can* 32(4):216-26; PMID 23046804

2011 - Lo Siou G, Yasui Y, Csizmadia I, McGregor SE & Robson PJ. Exploring statistical approaches to diminish subjectivity of cluster analysis to derive dietary patterns: the Tomorrow Project. *Am J Epidemiol* 173(8):956-67; PMID 21421742

2010 - Linder J, McLaren L, Siou GL, Csizmadia I & Robson PJ. The epidemiology of weight perception: perceived weight versus self-reported actual weight status among Albertan adults. *Can J Public Health* 101(1):56-60; PMID 20364540

2008 - Robson PJ, Siou GL, Ullman R & Bryant HE. Sociodemographic, health and lifestyle characteristics reported by discrete groups of adult dietary supplement users in Alberta, Canada: Findings from the Tomorrow Project. *Public Health Nutr* 11(12):1238-47; PMID 18457599

2007 - Richardson H, Aronson KJ, James A, McGregor SE & Bryant H. Factors related to use of prostate cancer screening: the Alberta Tomorrow Project. *Open Med* 1(1):e3-12; PMID 20101288

2005 - McGregor SE & Bryant HE. Predictors of colorectal cancer screening: a comparison of men and women. *Can J Gastroenterol* 19(6):343-9; PMID 15997267

	Lists of outputs from ATP will be listed on our new website.
Reviewer 3	Dr. Louise Parker
Institution	Dalhousie University, Medicine and Pediatrics, Halifax, NS
General comments (author response in bold)	<p>A well written and clear paper describing the current status of the Alberta Tomorrow Project, which together with 4 other cohorts comprises the Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project, a pan Canadian prospective cohort study of over 300,000 participants which is a research resource of national importance.</p> <p>We thank the reviewer for her positive comments and support for the project.</p>