Author's response to reviews

Title: General practitioners knowledge and practice of complementary/alternative medicine and its relationship with life-styles: a population-based survey in Italy

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* Detailed information on the selection of participants and sample size calculation has been added in the "Study population" paragraph.
* Information on how the eleven types of CAM were chosen and explanations of mesotherapy, pranotherapy and phytotherapy are given in the "Questionnaire and data collection" paragraph.
* The discussion has been focused on the main findings and original aspects of the study. Overall, the discussion is now more straightforward and concise.
* A flow-chart representing the selection process and participation status of the study population has been added as Figure 1.
* The results section has been made less redundant mainly by removal of details on the characteristics of participants shown in Table 1. Also, information about the response rate has been placed in this section.
* Information about CAM use by the general population has been moved to the background and the expression "north-south gradient" has been explained.
* The following formatting changes have been made according to the BMC medicine journals - Authors checklist for manuscript formatting: 1) title page according to example; 2) abstract restructured into Background, Methods, Results, Conclusions; 3) Conclusions section added to manuscript; 4) references cited in the text before punctuation; 5) reference list formatted according to example; 6) figures uploaded as separate files; 7) Borders of table cells have been made visible black lines.
* Regarding ethics, the study is a survey carried out through a postal questionnaire and approval from an appropriate ethics committee was not needed. This has not been written in the text; however, we are ready to include it in the methods section if you wish so.
* Unfortunately, it was not possible to compare survey responders with non-responders to show how representative the sample is. However, I would like to stress that the representativeness of the sample should be assured by 1) selection of 100% female and 60% (n=1310) random sample male GPs; 2) high response rate (82%). Regarding age distribution, other studies confirm that Italian physicians are older than their European colleagues [1) Habiba M, Kaminski M, Da Fre M, et al. Caesarean section on request: a comparison of obstetricians’ attitudes in eight European countries. BJOG. 2006 Jun;113(6):647-56. 2) Rebagliato M, Cuttini M, Broggin L, et al. EURONIC Study Group (European Project on Parents’ Information and Ethical Decision Making in Neonatal Intensive Care Units). Neonatal end-of-life decision making: Physicians' attitudes and relationship with self-reported practices in 10 European countries. JAMA. 2000 Nov 15;284(19):2451-9.].

Finally, as suggested the article has been re-edited by a native English speaking colleague.