Reviewer's report

Title: Pharmacotherapy of elderly patients in everyday anthroposophic medical practice: a prospective, multicenter observational study

Version: 1 Date: 8 April 2010

Reviewer: Jeffrey T T Sherer

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1) Background, p4 (and elsewhere): As someone who is admittedly not well versed in CAM or anthroposophic medicine, the most difficult thing for me to follow was how the different drugs were placed in the different categories. The terminology does not seem to be used consistently. For example, on this page the authors mention "complimentary drugs". Does this mean the same thing as CAM? What exactly does that include? It may be obvious to others, but I would consider including a Venn diagram that includes all the different categories of drugs evaluated (complementary, CAM, anthroposophic therapies, homeopathic, phytotherapeutic, etc.).

Minor Essential Revisions

2) Background, p4: In the data cited from reference 2, are these prescription drugs only, prescription + over-the-counter, or something else? Please clarify.

3) Results, p9: The authors discuss, here and elsewhere, "treatment diagnoses per year". Does this mean new diagnoses, all diagnoses, etc.?

4) Results, p10 and Table 2: What criteria were used to classify drugs as conventional or CAM? Also, based on the statement regarding hypericum being "phytopharmaceutical, homeopathic, or anthroposophic remedy), it appears that a drug could fall into > 1 category. How was that done?

5) Discussion, p17. The statement that HTN management in elderly patients is more important at reducing morbidity than any other intervention should ideally be referenced.

Discretionary Revisions

6) Background, p4: The authors state that not knowing prescribing pattern in the elderly is "hardly understandable". I read this to mean "difficult to understand". Was this the intent? If so, would consider revising to state exactly that.

7) Background, p5: During what time period did the findings reported from reference 9 occur? A specific year, decade, forever, etc.?

8) Background, p5: Again, it might be just me, but as someone who has never heard of anthroposophic medicine, it would be nice to have a little more
description about what it is, how it differs from other forms of CAM, etc. here. Later, the authors discuss anthroposophic remedies. I have no idea what these might entail.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.