Reviewer's report

Title: Measuring the effects of acupuncture and homoeopathy in general practice: An uncontrolled prospective documentation approach

Version: 1 Date: 10 November 2003

Reviewer: George Lewith

Reviewer's report:

Dear Sirs

I have reviewed the study from Freiburg and found the paper fascinating. I have to declare an interest in that I am familiar with Harald Walach’s work in this area, and have already seen some of his data at various conferences and discussed it with him. In answer to your specific questions.

1. There is a real need to collect descriptive data in this area to develop an understanding of effect size. The data collection by Dr Walach’s group was very broadly based an unfocused, although it did use a well validated outcome (the SS36). The question was important, but the nature of the study meant that it could not be particularly well defined.

2. In view of the above the methods were appropriate, well described and enough details were supplied to replicate the work.

3. This was not a randomised controlled trial; the data was clearly descriptive and as such will provided a valuable reference source for other CAM researchers. The discussions and conclusions are appropriately self critical. They clearly are well balanced and I would recommend publication.

4. The title and abstract accurately convey the contents of the paper and the writing style is acceptable. I would very much want this particular study to be published, as I feel it adds substantially to descriptive information in this area, which I believe is of vital importance.