Reviewer's report

Title: Does trust in health care influence the use of complementary and alternative medicine by chronically ill patients?

Version: 2 Date: 15 April 2006

Reviewer: Mark A Hall

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
- The article should focus on the relationship between trust and CAM use, and not include general findings about CAM use. In other words, I recommend dropping research questions 2a and 2b as a main focus, because these points appear to be covered already elsewhere in the literature, and they greatly expand the scope of the article.
- In several places the language is unclear or awkward. I suggest having someone fluent in English edit this after it is revised.
- More details of the factor analysis should be given.
- It is unclear what "present medical possibilities" means? Does this mean access to effective care, or the ability of medicine to treat problems effectively? And, how does this concept differ from "present health care"? Does that mean health care they've actually received or are receiving? This should be clarified in the methods section, and then the significance of these differences discussed in the discussion section.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
- English translation of exact wording of trust questions should be provided.
- Introduction is too long and confusing. It should focus only on why the relationships between trust and CAM use by chronically ill is a potentially interesting question. Delete the aspects that discuss trust generally, or CAM use generally.
- Methods section describing the survey should be shortened by citing other publications.
- In the Discussion section, the claim that changes in the Dutch financing system cause lower trust is too speculative. It's fine to state this as a possible explanation, but this says it's "probable," without any documentation.
- The statement that one kind of trust is lower than another kind of trust (p. 10) is not well founded because these are two different constructs and so comparing the numerical responses is not meaningful, especially when they are this close (7.2 vs. 7.0).

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions
Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interes