Reviewer’s report

Title: Herbal medicine use among urban residents in Lagos, Nigeria

Version: 2 Date: 17 October 2011

Reviewer: Chi Wai Lui

Reviewer’s report:

This manuscript reports the findings of a cross-sectional survey that examined the prevalence of use of herbal medicines in a general population in Lagos, Nigeria. Overall, the paper was clearly written and had accomplished the tasks the authors set out to do. I have only a few suggestions for improvement on the manuscript:

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The definition of ‘African Traditional Medicine’ (p. 3, last paragraph) was redundant as it added nothing new to the WHO’s definition of ‘traditional medicine’ which was introduced and elaborated in the previous paragraph.

2. P.5, last three lines: ‘In some cases where herbal medicines WERE USED RATIONALLY, adverse reactions have been reported when used alone [21] or concurrently with conventional or orthodox medicines [22]’.

COMMENT: What is the meaning of ‘… were used rationally’ and how does it relate to the point under discussion here?

3. P.13, first paragraph: ‘Malaria is a common public health problem in Nigeria…. Despite the good awareness of ACT in Nigeria [33], the respondents preferred to treat malaria with herbal medicine preparations probably because of their awareness that artemesinin antimalarial drugs were of plant origin’.

COMMENT: I think the authors had jumped to the conclusion too fast here as there were many assumptions involved. Also it was unclear from where the observation ‘the respondents preferred to treat malaria with herbal medicine preparations probably because of their awareness that artemesinin antimalarial drugs were of plant origin’ was derived. Was it a finding of the current or previous research?

4. P.15, last 4 lines: ‘Considering the magnitude of popularity of herbal medicines among the respondents and their levels of ignorance of the potential toxicities, it is necessary to evaluate the safety, efficacy and quality of these preparations and products which may involve clinical trial studies’.

COMMENT: In addition to calling for more clinical trial studies, the authors may also examine/elaborate on the need for health education or to provide the general public with information about the safe use of herbal medicine.
5. The authors had confined the discussion/comparison of research findings to the context of Nigeria. Reference to and comparison with international studies on CAM use in general population will help broaden the scope of the paper.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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.