Reviewer's report

Title: The Urban-Rural Divide in Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use: A Longitudinal Study of 10,638 Women

Version: 2 Date: 31 August 2010

Reviewer: Lynda Balneaves

Reviewer's report:

The authors have done a nice job of addressing the concerns raised in previous reviews. A few issues remain outstanding but should be easily addressed.

Major:

- My comment about the clinical significance of the findings was not completely addressed. While the authors did a nice job of adding in some comments in the discussion about the need to assess for CAM use in rural clinical settings, my comments were about whether the differences seen between groups in the study were "clinical significant". This means, does the amount of difference seen in mean scores (for example 1.03 vs 1.93 between CAM users and non-users re: satisfaction with access to medical specialist) really have clinical relevance? Is a difference between 1 and 2 in satisfaction than meaningful? Again, despite having a highly significant p-value, the large sample size may mean meaningless differences are still significant. Some comment about this in the discussion is warranted.

Minor:

- My concerns about the p-value used in the analyses were addressed by the authors, however, the decision to use a p < .005 should be noted in the Data Analysis section under the Methods and a rationale for this decision included.

- I found the following sentence to be awkwardly worded: "CAM is also found to be a common health maintenance strategy used by older adults living in rural areas providing one part of a comprehensive approach to help ensure wellbeing". Recommend re-wording.

- On a second read of the manuscript, the use of "Overall" to begin many of the sentences in the Results section was tedious. Minor editing would improve the flow of this section.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'