Reviewer's report

Title: Chronic pain referred to a complementary medicine clinic- A prospective descriptive study.

Version: 1 Date: 16 March 2011

Reviewer: Chi Wai Lui

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript provides a descriptive account of patients visiting a complementary medicine clinic for a chronic pain complaint in Israel. The paper is written in an appropriate style and format. Major reworking is recommended, particularly in the section of discussion.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Title:
The authors may consider changing the title. The present title ‘Chronic pain referred to a complementary medicine clinic' is misleading as the paper focused on characteristics of the patients visiting the clinic.

Background:
The literature review is too broad and general. Instead of examining the use of CAM in the general population, the authors should focus on research evidence on the use of CAM for pain relief/symptoms.

Results:
The last paragraph in this section needs to be expanded and elaborated. This is especially the case on types of CAM treatment used by the patients. Table 4 indicated that these CAM treatments had been experienced by the patients in the past. The important questions in related to the aim of this paper are: whether the patients are still using them now or not and whether they are using them for pain relief or for other unrelated symptoms/purposes.

Discussion:
1. Most of the first three paragraphs (summary of ref 19-22) should be moved to the background/literature review.
2. The comparison of the findings (based on visitors to a CAM clinic) with data of the Central Bureau of Statistics (p. 9) is problematic as the latter were collected from patients visiting primary care clinics.
3. The claim that ‘One of the prediction points to attendance to complementary medicine according to the literature is the existence of chronic diseases. Similar findings were shown in our study.’ (p. 9) is misleading or begging the question as the present research was confined to the study of patients that has a ‘chronic pain complaint’ (p. 5).
4. ‘The main reason for referral to complementary medicine clinic…’ should be ‘the main reason for attending complementary medicine clinic….’ (p. 9). It seems that the authors used ‘referral to/referred to CAM’ and ‘reasons using CAM’ interchangeably throughout the manuscript. This is confusing as the two are different.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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