Author's response to reviews

Title: The prevalence and experience of Australian naturopaths and Western herbalists working within community pharmacies

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Version: 2 Date: 3 February 2011

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We appreciate the time and effort the four reviewers have put in to reviewing our manuscript entitled ‘The prevalence and experience of Australian naturopaths and Western herbalists working within community pharmacies’

A copy of the questionnaire used will be submitted with the manuscript. Not all the results have been included in this manuscript and will be reported separately. The competing interest statement has been included in the manuscript. The % figures have been rechecked and corrected in the tables, as suggested by reviewer 4. In some instances, not all survey participants responded to all questions so responder values have been clarified where necessary.

In response to reviewer 2 comments, the online survey was available nationally and offered to practitioners around the entire country. This has been clarified in the manuscript. Data about practitioner location was not collected as it did not appear relevant to the main aim of the study, although this was a good suggestion for future studies and clarified in the manuscript. Researchers did not have access to email lists and did not send reminder emails to prospective participants. National professional associations and major product manufacturers encouraged participation through their newsletters and journals before the study commenced and during the data collection period. It is impossible to accurately determine how many times a practitioner may have been contacted using this method or how many practitioners were contacted. The ‘positive learning experience’ stated in the abstract is discussed in more detail in the full length manuscript. Regarding the query about the use of the term ‘solidly orthodox methods’ this is reported as a direct quote with reference provided. Gender comparisons to other surveys were considered and reported as similar in the manuscript. As suggested, further exploration about the nature of the information exchange between naturopaths and pharmacists could be the subject of future research and has been clarified in the manuscript. The relevance of paragraphs 2 and 3 in the discussion section were not considered irrelevant by the other 3 reviewers so have remained. Other suggestions have been addressed.

Thank you for supplying these useful reviewer comments

Dr Lesley Braun (on behalf of the author team)