Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge and attitudes towards complementary and alternative medicine among medical students in Turkey

Version: 1 Date: 23 September 2011

Reviewer: Sheila Greenfield

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Abstract
The discussion section contains some repetition of the results section and the discussion needs to take more of a summary approach rather than just repeating results.

Background
In addition to making statements about international trends in CAM use and medical education in order to add to the existing literature the background should give more information about CAM popularity in the Turkish context. The authors also need to make the case as to why their research question is important.

There are some statements which needs further explanation e.g.
"In 1996 a broad based panel evaluated CAM education" what was this panel?
There are some statements which need further explanation and referencing e.g.
"In Turkey, there is no uniform policy...medical curricula.
There are some statements which need referencing e.g Interest in Complementary...among health professionals
Reference 2 is rather old-could the authors find a more recent reference.

Methods
More details needed for clarification
Why were 1st, 5th & 6th year students chosen?
Why were the provinces divided on the basis of level of economic development?
How many faculties of medicine in totoal were in each sub-group? Why were 6 selected randomly and the 7th not?
How many students did the total possible opoulation contain?
What is "the Turkish CAM portal"?

Data analysis:
More details is needed of any comparisons done

Results
% needs to given as well as numbers in the first sentence.
Any therapies that the general reader may not understand need to be explained briefly e.g. 'healing hands' mean?

Discussion

Care needs to be taken that claims are made in the context of the study e.g. "Some CAM methods are well known by the majority of medical students" this needs in the study population adding to the sentence.

Details of the most well known methods practiced in Turkey need to be given in the Introduction—the results can then be contextualized against these in the discussion.

paragraphs 2, 3, 4 contain some repetition of the results and need summarising.

The content of paragraph 6 also needs mention in the Introduction to set the scene. In the Introduction the authors need to critically discuss existing studies in Turkey and any variables e.g. gender, year of study which have been explored in previous studies.

In paragraph 7 the statement "There are very few evidence based data...limited" is a very broad statement and needs rethinking. There are more evidence based data for some CAM modalities than others and the authors need to think carefully about the point they wish to make e.g. They might choose to talk about the evidence base for the most popular therapies in Turkey.

The study limitations section is far too brief and needs expanding in the context of the comments made about the methodology above.

Conclusion

The first sentence needs rephrasing. e.g. Most medical students in the study knew about the CAM methods widely used in Turkey...

Minor Essential Revisions

Spelling and grammar needs to be carefully checked throughout

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

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'