Reviewer’s report

Title: Utilization Pattern of Traditional Chinese Medicine for Liver Cancer Patients in Taiwan

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Reviewer: Vincent Chung

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The quality of the article has improved but there are several important questions to be resolved - in particular, interpretations of findings need to be further polished:

1. Abstract:

The authors stated that: “After multivariable adjustment, the likelihood of TCM users was higher in participants aged 70 years and older (odds ratio, OR = 0.79, 95% confidence interval, CI: 0.52–0.68), females (OR = 60, 95% CI: 0.52–0.68), and residents of central Taiwan (OR = 1.99, 95% CI: 1.56–2.54)”

I am afraid that an OR of 0.79 for those aged > 70 implies lower likelihood of usage while the OR is 0.6 instead of 60 for females? Please clarify

2. Tables

Figures in supplement table 1 stated that the number of TCM users amongst liver cancer patients is 406 persons. This mismatches with table 1, which suggested 1240 persons. Why is it so?

3. In the paragraph “Use of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in Asian countries”

The authors may want to cite a more comprehensive review on why and how Chinese populations view TCM instead of using three singled out studies. See Health Expect. 2012 May 31. doi: 10.1111/j.1369-7625.2012.00794.x.

This article may help you to explain why LC patients like to seek TCM treatments to address their “general symptoms”.

4. Discussion

No explanation where given on why women are more likely to use TCM, as well as why patients > 70 were using less TCM. The authors may want to make reference to utilization patterns in other Chinese populations (e.g. BMC Health Services Research 2009, 9:207 doi:10.1186/1472-6963-9-207).

Deeper discussion on why LC patients use TCM to manage “general symptoms” is needed.

No explanation on why majority of the TCM services were provided by the private sector; and the potential implication on services quality and access were not
discussed.

5. **Table 3:**
   Number should not be written as “49,506”

**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, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests