Reviewer's report

**Title:** CAM practitioners in the Australian health workforce: an underutilized resource

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 23 September 2012

**Reviewer:** Stefanie Joos

**Reviewer's report:**

The author has revised the article with regard to the reviewer comments. Some points are clearer now (e.g. discussion of costs and education). However, some of my earlier criticism remains unaffected and, moreover, I have my problems with some of the revised passages:

Following some examples:

I had suggested to include an international perspective. The author has included some points with regard to education now. However, the international perspective would be most interesting with regard to the question how to integrate CAM practitioners in "normal" the health care system. The revised passage, however, does not include this perspective.

I appreciate the inclusion of "potential disadvantages". However, I see some more possible disadvantages e.g. delayed therapy or complete lack of adequate conventional therapy. This is a major problem for patient safety. Legislating CAM practitioners in a similar fashion to that of nurse practitioners would lead to more interfaces of care with known consequences. In case of ordering diagnostic interventions by CAM practitioners there would be a risk of oversupply with diagnostics and overdiagnosing. Furthermore, following the description in the manuscript I would see a problem in the distinction between the role of nurse practitioners and CAM practitioners.

I agree with the earlier criticism of reviewer 3 that it would be favorable to consider registered and non-registered practitioners separately. But this is important not only for the description of the work practices but also for the implications (which means for the debate part of the article). Describing the sociodemographics of osteopaths in this context makes no sense to me.

**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'