Author's response to reviews

Title: The Quest for Modernisation of Traditional Chinese Medicine

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. Rowles,

Re: 173373202917288 □ The Quest for Modernisation of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Thank you for inviting us to submit a revised version of this manuscript. Based on Associate Editor’s comments and your advice, we have revised as follows – *editors’ comments are highlighted in italic blue fonts* and *our replies are shown in fold black fonts*.

Associate Editor’s comment: *Regarding your paper, entitled “The quest for modernisation of traditional Chinese Medicine”, after internal discussion within the editorial office of BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine, it has been agreed that your paper is potentially acceptable to the journal, subject to an assessment of your responses to the reviews for your paper as submitted to BMC Medicine. I have now looked carefully at this and am satisfied that with your overall responses to their comments.*

Thank you for accepting our earlier revisions and our responses to reviewers commissioned by BMC Med. All our further revisions will be based on the earlier version.

Associate Editor’s comment: *However, I would ask you to make one additional change: to provide insight into how the work that informed the report presented in the body of the paper was drawn up. This would need to include inter alia: reference to EU funded work;…*

In the abstract, we have now included the following information:

“This 3.5-year project that involved inputs from over 200 scientists resulted in the production of 20 editorials and in-depth reviews on different aspects of TCM that were published in a special issue of *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* (2012; volume 140, issue 3).”

In the manuscript, the following 12 papers of the above special issue have been cited to inform readers about the EU funded work:


67. Chan K, Shaw D, Simmonds MS, Leon CJ, Xu Q, Lu A, Sutherland I, Ignatova S, Zhu YP, Vervoort R, Williamson EM, Duez P: *Good practice in reviewing and publishing studies on herbal medicine, with special emphasis on traditional
Chinese medicine and Chinese materia medica. *J Ethnopharmacol* 2012, **140**:469-475.


73. Shaw D, Graeme L, Pierre D, Elizabeth W, Kelvin C. Pharmacovigilance of herbal medicine. *J Ethnopharmacol* 2012, **140**:513-518.


Associate Editor’s comment: … methods used to undertake the extensive review reported here; and comments on the quality / credibility of the sources A core part of the purpose would be to guide a reader over your choices of sources, credibility of the report and arguments made. I would thus ask you to bear the latter points in mind and add appropriate text to assist the reader on this. This material would then be situated within the Background section. I suggest that this will considerably strengthen the quality of your debate article.

We thank this Associate Editor for this excellent advice, which we do think very helpful for strengthening our manuscript.

In the end of Introduction, we have included a section to inform readers what type of manuscript this is and how our information was gathered:

“Due to the wide range of information needed for this narrative review, inclusion and exclusion of literature were judged by co-authors who are experts in the related research area, based on the quality of work but also on the necessity for illustrating specific research areas. Consensus was sought among all authors if quality and credibility of any sources of information were questioned by any co-author.”
Executive Editor’s comment: In addition, please be aware that we feel your manuscript would be more suitable for consideration as a Review, rather than as a Debate. We have therefore proceeded to change the article type on our system. Could we please ask you to ensure that your manuscript is formatted in accordance with our formatting guidelines for Reviews (http://www.biomedcentral.com/bmccomplementalternmed/authors/instructions/review). This should not entail a large amount of work. Please also note that the word limit listed in the instructions represents a guide, and we are able to be flexible about this figure. We would be grateful if you could address the comments in a revised manuscript and provide a cover letter giving a point-by-point response to the concerns.

We agree. We have now revised the paper based on the format requests for reviews indicated in the above link. The revised version has the following changes in comparison to the earlier version:

1. Abstract: It has now been changed into an unstructured single paragraph summary (280 words).
2. Following format requests for reviews, “Background”, “Discussion” and “Summary” have now been changed to “Introduction”, “Review” and “Conclusions”.

We did not change the references and appreciate the Executive Editor to kindly offer flexibility on reference number.

All major revisions have now been described in this cover letter. All minor revisions were tracked in the updated manuscript and have been agreed by all co-authors.

Executive Editor’s comment: Please also ensure that your revised manuscript conforms to the journal style (http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/ifora/medicine_journals ). It is important that your files are correctly formatted.

Thanks. We have double-checked all format requirements.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

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