Reviewer's report

Title: Perspectives of Older Adults on Co-Management of Low Back Pain by Doctors of Chiropractic and Family Medicine Physicians: A Focus Group Study

Version: 2 Date: 24 July 2013

Reviewer: Dan Cherkin

Reviewer's report:

This qualitative study does a good job of addressing an important general question that has been largely neglected for decades: what are the opportunities for overcoming the barriers to integrating complementary and alternative care with conventional medical care for conditions commonly managed by both types of providers? This study focuses on the largest group of CAM providers (chiropractors) for the most common condition for which CAM care is sought by patients (back pain).

There are a number of Minor Essential Revisions that would substantially improve this manuscript:

1. In the abstract and throughout the manuscript, be more consistent in what model is being studied: integrative practice model, co-management (as in title) or collaborative care. These are not the same. I believe that collaborative care or co-management might be more appropriate than integrative practice which implies something beyond collaboration.

2. If seems that the general issue addressed in this manuscript applies equally to older and younger adults. Either clarify why this is more important to explore for older adults or just mention that while important more broadly, this study focused on older adults. Then comment in Discussion on how findings might/might not apply to younger adults and whether additional research in that population is warranted.

3. Would be helpful to note in the limitations how the patients selected for this study differed from the target population of older adults with back pain. I would think that they were more likely than the general population to have received both chiropractic and medical care. How might that have affected the findings?

Discretionary Revisions

Line 95 - list the main ways in which you modified standard focus group techniques

Line 159 - some words seem to be missing between the words talked (e.g., with them at length?) for their condition.

Line 262 - start second sentence with the word "Most"
Lines 299-302 - this sentence seems out of place - suggest clarifying relevance or deleting

Line 312 - Suggest rewording to: "those closed to co-management were not represented."

Tables 3-5: I wonder if there is a way of briefly summarizing the information in these tables in a few sentences or include them as a web appendix. The data look fairly similar and are not very interesting.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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