Reviewer's report

Title: Features of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use by Patients with Coronary Artery Disease in Beijing: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Reviewer: Meei-Fang Lou

Reviewer's report:

The authors carried out a questionnaire survey to understand the prevalence, types, perceived effectiveness, reasons, and associated factors of CAM use in patients diagnosed with CAD at outpatient clinics of four teaching hospitals in Beijing. During the study period 546 questionnaires were collected, with most (69%) confirming CAM use. The researchers determined that CAM users tended to be older, have a longer disease duration and better current health status.

This manuscript achieves the purpose the authors set out to accomplish. Below are issues in the paper that need to be addressed:

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The aim statements on abstract (line 3 to investigate the prevalence, types, attitudes, reasons….) and page 6 (line 3-4 to determine the prevalence, types, perceived effectiveness, and reasons…) are inconsistent. Please amend it.

2. Please add the main result of perceived effectiveness on the result session of abstract.

3. Please add key words after abstract.

4. The study recruited only patients who were seeking medical advices at outpatient clinics, so information about those who did not looking for outpatient follow-ups, or those who relied exclusively on other regimens is limited, which may bias the extent of CAM use.

5. The participants were not properly introduced. What is the representation of this sample? (how many CAD patients visit the out-patient clinic, what is the frequency of visit, how long has the relation interviewed been involved in the care of the patient…). Did the authors assume that all those interviewed were literate? I presume that not all the participants will be knowledgeable of those classes of CAM. What is the recall time for CAM use? How did you categorize the status for CAM use? I would expect the patients to be classified as CAM “users”, “non-users” and “exposed” based on a time frame of CAM-use. I would suggest compare these three groups to know the different patterns.

6. Please provide the questionnaire along with the manuscript for review. The design should include the questionnaire design, how the questionnaire was validated, and definitions of CAM. Is exercise a type of CAM? There is an acceptable way of classifying CAM. Authors should specify each type of CAM
category sought in this study based on a standard classification form.

7. On pages 7-8, some of the sample questions are open questions (e.g. questions 8 and 9). How did patients’ responses be coded and analyzed?

8. Patient might use more than one types of CAM, and might use one type continuously and other type intermittently or used once. How did the frequency be summarized as continuous, intermittent and used once? (sample question 6).

9. On sample question 7, the effect of CAM was categorized as Yes or No. While patients used more the one types of CAM and perceived different effect for different of CAM, how did the effect be categorized?

10. Page 11 line 8 “treating the root cause” and Table 3 the category under Reasons for CAM use “Treating primary cause”. Did they mean the same? Please use it consistently.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests