Author's response to reviews

Title: The co-use of conventional drugs and herbs among patients in Norwegian general practice: a cross-sectional study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor and referees,

Thank you for considering our article to be published in BMC CAM. The paper entitled “The co-use of conventional drugs and herbs among patients in Norwegian general practice: a cross-sectional study” is revised according to the referees considerations and the editors comments.

Best regards,

Ane Djuv
On behalf of all authors
Comments by Referee 1: (Professor Hedvig Nordeng)

None (The manuscript has been substantially improved. I have no further comments.)

Comments by Referee 2 (Dr Titilayo O Fakeye)

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Under materials and methods, the authors should state the dates as 11th July till 15th of December, which by the way is longer than the stated 5 weeks
   Answer: Thanks for pointing this out. This was a typo. We have changed it to 11th November till 15th of December

2. Under Questionnaire, 3rd paragraph, last sentence. “Non-users were defined as those answering that they used herbs earlier or never used”. The question is when is earlier since the definition is someone who had at least herbs less than monthly or periodically. I believe the authors should recast this sentence to give the actual meaning they are trying to portray
   Answer: We agree with the reviewer that this is not clear, and have changed the wording to “… those answering that they do not use herbs now, but have used herbs earlier or never used”. We did not ask more specifically about how long ago they used herbs as we were looking at current co-use.

3. The last paragraph included part of the results which I do not think is right. See the bold font In the last part of the questionnaire the communication between the patient and health care professionals, motives for use or no use and who recommended use of herbs were obtained (Tables 1 and 5).
   Answer: Sorry, we do not know what the comment is about. We have not found any discrepancy between the results and the tables.

4. Under Statistics, 2nd paragraph, it should be “…. with drug-only users including…..”
   Answer: We have changed this according to the reviewers comment.

5. On page 13, after Table 3 “Of these, 18 were identified of being at risk of clinical relevant interactions (in bold, Table 4.). What does “(in bold Table 4)” stand for? This is also found on page 18.
   Answer: To make it easier to identify the relevant interactions, we have used bold numbers in table 4. We have changed the text to “… (these are highlighted with numbers in bold, Table 4.)” to make this understandable.

6. Last line under Results,” … drug users…” may not be the right phrase to use
   Answer: We have changed to “drug-only” users.

Editorial comments:

- We note that there are some slight issues with the formatting of your tables (percent symbols appearing under numbers, for example). We would therefore ask you to carefully check your tables and resolve these. In the event that these problems are being
caused by the size of the tables, please do feel free to upload them as additional files rather than including them in your manuscript.

Answer: We have changed the tables according to the editors comment.

Additional changes:
- Added: “purple coneflower” behind Echinacea on page 12, 2nd paragraph.
- Changed a typo on page 18 from “… nearly all of the co-users…” to “…nearly half of the co-users…”. 