Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prevalence and factors associated with the use of complementary and alternative medicine practitioners in 8 countries of the former Soviet Union

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Dear Editor,

I am writing to you concerning the manuscript entitled ‘Prevalence and factors associated with the use of complementary and alternative medicine practitioners in 8 countries of the former Soviet Union’ by Andrew Stickley and co-authors which was recently submitted to the journal BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine for consideration for publication.

I was contacted and informed that I needed to add additional information to the manuscript in relation to the following Editorial request:

“Please state in the Methods section whether written informed consent for participation in the study was obtained from participants or, where participants are children, a parent or guardian.”
In response to this request we have now added the following information to the Methods section:

“Before being included in the study respondents gave their verbal consent to participate.”

The study population was all aged 18 or above. At the time of the survey we were informed by our collaborating centre partners in the former Soviet countries that people would not provide signed written consent as they thought it might be used to identify them and there was an unwillingness to do so in light of the history of state abuses in the past. Hence a decision was taken to obtain verbal consent.

Thank you for considering this manuscript for publication.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Stickley.