Author's response to reviews

Title: The use of complementary medicine by a self-selected community group of Australian women with polycystic ovary syndrome

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BMC Alternative and Complementary Medicine,

Dear Madam/Sir,

Please find attached our paper titled: ‘The use of complementary medicine by a self-selected community group of Australian women with polycystic ovary syndrome.’

You should publish this article as it is the first to measure the prevalence of use, attitudes and experiences towards complementary medicine by women with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). PCOS is a common, heterogeneous, reproductive endocrine condition that affects up to 18% of reproductive aged women. Women have expressed their strong desire for alternative treatments however to date there is very limited evidence describing level of use or experiences including adverse effects of CM by this large group of women within the community.

This Australian based study examined the prevalence of use for a range of CM’s by 493 women with PCOS in the community. Two surveys were undertaken; the first recruited from a community based support group, the Polycystic Ovary Association of Australia (POSAA), the second recruited from three PCOS support groups on the social network site Facebook. Over 70% of women reported use of CM, 49% reported multiple use. Most CM users reported effectiveness and advantages however disadvantages were also reported along with self-reported adverse reactions. The research contributes to our understanding of women with PCOS in the community, their use, attitudes and experiences with CM and self-care practices.

None of the authors have any competing interests to declare.

Thank you for considering our paper for publication in the BMC Alternative and Complementary Medicine.

Yours sincerely

Susan Arentz