Author’s response to reviews

Title: New Canadian Natural Health Product Regulations: A Qualitative Study of How CAM Practitioners Perceive They Will Be Impacted

Authors:
Karen Moss (karen.moss@utoronto.ca)
Heather S Boon (heather.boon@utoronto.ca)
Peri Ballantyne (p.ballantyne@utoronto.ca)
Natasha Kachan (n.kachan@utoronto.ca)

Version: 2 Date: 17 March 2006

Author’s response to reviews:

17 March 2006

Dear Editor

Thank you for the reviews our paper has received. Below we itemize our response to the comments and changes made to the manuscript:

1. Reviewer - Kathi Kemper

General Comments
a. Studying the implementation of public policy means that we are trying to evaluate a moving target. We believe that things have not changed significantly from when we collected the data in late 2004; however, even if the findings do not accurately reflect what is happening today it remains important to critique and reflect on what has happened so that it might inform future policy development and implementation.

b. Chiropractors were omitted from the study because unlike US chiropractors, Canadian chiropractors use far fewer natural health products (NHPs) in their practices. The project was designed to focus on those practitioners for whom NHPs form a core and critical part of their scope of practice. According to the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners' survey of US chiropractors (2003), 89% of US chiropractors say they use nutritional counseling, therapy or supplementation in their practices (and about 35% of US chiropractic patients receive supplements). The undergraduate training of Canadian chiropractors does include basic nutrition including basic vitamin and mineral supplementation, but this is considered supplementary to their core work of manipulation. They have little/no undergraduate training in the use of the other NHPs. According to a recent survey by the Canadian Chiropractic Association, only 35% of Canadian chiropractors ever provide any sort of nutritional advice (Personal Communication, Silvano Mior, DC, Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, March 14 2006). Perhaps future studies should include chiropractors and other groups that incorporate NHPs as significant add-ons to their core practices.

c. Yes, all practitioner groups were asked the same questions. The interview guide is now included in an Appendix.

d. The analysis about relative power was the authors' interpretation of the respondent's comments. This was not directly asked about in the interviews.

Major Compulsory Revisions
a. We have explained why chiropractors were omitted above. We have also clarified this in the paper and added a comment about how it may affect the generalizability on page 17.

b. The rationale for including the specific CAM practitioner groups has been clarified.

c. The interview guide has been added as an Appendix

d. Added paragraphs on limitations of the study and outlining potential future research questions (see pp. 17-18)
Minor Essential Regulations
a. "Regulations" has been changed to the lower case "regulations" throughout.

b. Statement on page 6 has been removed.

c. Conclusion in abstract revised.

d. The paper has been shortened, but due to the request to add more information describing the NHP regulations, it was not possible to shorten it to 15 pages.

Reviewer: Moshe Frenkel

General Comments/ Major Compulsory Revisions
1. Additional information about the Canadian regulations is now provided.

2. The objective about the public has been removed.

3. The paragraph describing the theoretical framework has been revised to make it flow better with the rest of the background and remove unnecessary description of the specific anthropology of policy theory.

4. Discussion has been stream-lined.

5. Findings and Discussion are more clearly delineated.

Please find attached our revised manuscript. We look forward to receiving your additional comments on our work.

Sincerely,

Heather Boon, PhD