Reviewer's report

Title: Doctors views of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) and its role within the NHS: an exploratory qualitative study

Version: 1  Date: 20 December 2006

Reviewer: Florica Marian

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting article which should be published

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. In the introduction, the authors address the need for exploring the GP views about CAM, including those who do not practise any CAM. The sampling strategy, however, does not state clearly how the doctors were recruited in order to include those who do not practise any CAM. In the data collection section either, the authors did not mention whether the question about the doctors practise of CAM was asked to them. On the other hand, one of the results is that some of the interviewees in the group called “enthusiasts” had undergone further training in CAM and practised certain therapies such as homeopathy. The authors say that the participating doctors were identified via personal contact and through snowballing effects. This could lead to a recruitment of participants who are sharing common views, instead of having a broad range of opinions. Therefore I suggest describe the sampling strategy more in-depth and state the reasons for this choice.

2. Concerning data analysis and interpretation, I suggest the authors give some further information about the theoretical background used to identify and code both the anticipated and the emergent themes.

3. The authors did not mention if they used some strategies to validate the results (for example triangulation). I suggest address this issue in the limitations of the study.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

1. The word “take” is missing in the sentence, page 3 line 5.
2. The year is missing in the reference 28

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests