Author's response to reviews

**Title:** Patterns of complementary and alternative medicine use amongst outpatients in Tokyo, Japan

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Dear Editor

Re: MS: 1428371468179573 - Patterns of complementary and alternative medicine use amongst outpatients in Tokyo, Japan

Thank you for your e-mail. We were delighted to hear the news that our manuscript has been accepted for publication. We would like to thank the reviewers for their helpful comments and critically analysing our paper.

We have the pleasure of submitting a revised manuscript having done all the necessary revisions requested by the reviewers. Please find below our responses to the individual reviewers comments.

Reviewer 1 (Aslak Steinsbekk)

1) Definition of CAM. There is no need for the NCCAM definition in the methods. What is needed is the exact wording of the question used.

We have included the NCCAM definition in the methods because this was the definition that we used in the context of this study to explain to patients. We therefore feel that it would be useful to keep this definition in the methods section and we have made a statement to say that this definition was used whenever a
verbal explanation of CAM was requested by patients.

2) It should be stated / discussed if the definitions of CAM differ between this study and the Yamashita study and the consequences of this on the different prevalence.

We have now included this point in our discussion section.

3) The number of references seems to be quite a lot higher than needed. It is OK with the references for the Japanese/Asian studies as they are not usually referenced, but there are too many on general CAM use.

We feel that it is important to incorporate numerous references regarding general CAM use in order to guide the reader through the general use of CAM around the world before focusing more in the Japanese context. We feel that our references and statement in the introduction regarding general CAM use is justified and of relevance to our paper.

4) The reference list is very much improved, but there are still some old references to CAM use that is not needed. Some examples of references to be used instead of those used:

Thank you for providing us with some updated references. We have incorporated / updated our references in line with the suggestions.

5) Graph 2. It would be easier to compare if percentage was used i.e. so that the total added up to 100%.

We have now updated our Graph 2 and have changed the y-axis to % as requested. We have also changed the layout of the Graph to make this compatible with Graph 1.

6) Multivariate analysis. It is surprising that this analysis did not yield anything else than the bivariate analysis. It is not surprising if only the variables in table 2 is included, but one would expect some indication on which variables that is most strongly associated with CAM use by including variables like
number of CAM therapies used, complaints etc. But if this is not the case, a statement should be included in the article that a multivariate analysis was performed with the variables included in the model.

We have included a statement regarding this in the methods section under “statistical analysis”

**Reviewer 2 (Ignacio Correa-Velez)**

1) There is no need to insert a reference in the abstract

We have removed the reference from the abstract as requested.

2) There are two sections in the paper in which a definition of CAM is given but the two definitions are not exactly the same (although related). The authors should choose only one definition, the definition that they used for the study.

We used the NCCAM definition of CAM therefore have left this in our manuscript and have removed the CAM definition by Ernst from our introduction.

3) In the statistical analysis section should be stated that when investigating the predictors of CAM use both univariate and multivariate analyses were conducted but the multivariate analyses failed to add/identify any other factors associated with CAM use other than that shown in the univariate analysis. Therefore only the results for the univariate analyses are presented.

We have included a statement with regards to this in the methods section “statistical analysis”.

**Other revisions in this manuscript**

1) Table 2 –The % column under “CAM users” should be out of all CAM users but we noted that the % figures were incorrect. We have therefore corrected this.

2) Table 2 & 3 - % rounded to the nearest integer to maintain consistency throughout
3) Table 4 – We noticed that we did not reference this table in the results section. Having reviewed this, we feel that the findings in this table can be summarized in a sentence (already included in the results section) and that this table is not really needed. We have therefore decided to drop this table from the manuscript.

4) Table 5 has as a consequence of the above now been renamed as Table 4. We have also added “95% Confidence Interval” values.

5) Introduction has been renamed to Background.

6) Competing interests – we have written “The authors declare that they have no competing interests”.

7) We have now included the tables within the body of the manuscript file, pasted at the end after the references as requested.

8) In quoting references within the body of the manuscript, we have changed the (x) to [x] format.

We hope that the revised manuscript is now ready for publication. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Satoshi Hori
(on behalf of the authors)