Reviewer's report

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

Version: 3 Date: 10 April 2008

Reviewer: Aslak Steinsbekk

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
The author must respond to these before a decision on publication can be reached. For example, additional necessary experiments or controls, statistical mistakes, errors in interpretation.

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.

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.

The number of references seems to be quiet 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

Minor Essential Revisions
The author can be trusted to make these. For example, missing labels on figures, the wrong use of a term, spelling mistakes.

Discretionary Revisions
These are recommendations for improvement which the author can choose to ignore. For example clarifications, data that would be useful but not essential.

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:


Ref 10 – Newer UK data wich includes results from ref 10: Thomas K, Coleman P. Use of complementary or alternative medicine in a general population in Great
It can be debated whether CAM use is still increasing. In fact studies like Tindle et al suggest that in recent years the use have stabilised.

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

Tab 1 not needed, a reference is enough

Multivariate analysis. It is surprising that this analysis did not yield anything else than the bivariat 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.

A short paragraph could be included in the discussion comparing the prevalence in the present studies with studies from other countries done in the same setting.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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