Reviewer's report

Title: Motivations for consulting complementary and alternative medicine practitioners: A comparison of consumers from 1997-8 and 2005

Version: 1 Date: 7 January 2008

Reviewer: Marja Verhoef

Reviewer's report:

Major

This paper is a secondary analysis of two relatively small scale, local, descriptive surveys, using convenience samples, of CAM use in Canada. In both surveys reasons for CAM use were studied based on a list of 6 reasons for CAM use developed in the UK in the mid-nineties. The objective is to compare these reasons. The paper is well written and the limitations (of which there are quite a few) are carefully addressed. While a comparison of change in reasons is relevant, my main concern is whether this paper is new and informative enough for publication. Part of the 1997-8 reasons have been reported in the 2002 paper and the author indicates that a paper on the second survey is in press elsewhere. Given the limitations, the â##so whatâ## question, deserves more attention. What implications do the results have, if any? How can the general change in CAM use for reasons that are more specifically related to the positive aspects of CAM, be put into context?

Minor

- The conclusion on page 2 (no page numbers were included, this is the second page of the Abstract) that motivations for consulting CAM practitioners from 1997/8 to 2005 has â##changed significantlyâ## seems too strong: Each of the 6 motivations was more likely to be endorsed in 2005, but while the order is slightly different, the top 3 motivations are the same in 2005. See also page 8 for the same issue.
- Typo page 3, line 6 and should be an.

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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