Reviewer's report

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

Version: 2 Date: 19 March 2008

Reviewer: Lynda G Balneaves

Reviewer's report:

The author has undertaken substantial revision to the manuscript as requested by the reviewers. These revisions have significantly improved the manuscript and correctly identified and addressed the previous limitations, particularly related to the methodological concerns raised regarding the nature of the survey. In particular, I applaud the author for including what is essentially a sensitivity analysis that shows how the differences in response format was not solely responsible for the significant shift in motivation. I feel that this manuscript does contribute to the literature by providing a longitudinal glimpse of how motivations related to CAM may have shifted over the past few years. This is important to consider as policy makers and clinicians become more interested in the notions of integrative care. Several points do remain that I encourage the author to consider:

Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

- Page 4 - I don't feel a "rationale" for the study is necessary in the manuscript. Recommend omitting.

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

- Page 6 - omit "client" from the fifth from bottom line. This term is not used elsewhere in the text.
- Page 9 - I would encourage the author to omit the findings related to shifts in herbalism and biofeedback. It does not appear that these therapies were assessed as response options in the survey (see Page 5), only practitioners were listed. As such, it is not appropriate to compare items that consumers self-reported through the open-ended item due to recall bias. Recommend omitting and only discussing differences in practitioners.
- Page 12 - change "loner" to "longer"
- P. 13 - when discussing the rise in reflexology use in 2005, it is important to mention the increased availability of this therapy through CAM offices in 2005 (which is mentioned on page 15). Recommend moving this sentence to page 13.

Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
N/A