Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of Complementary and Alternative Medicine use in Children with Chronic Health Conditions in Lagos, Nigeria

Version: 1 Date: 16 October 2008

Reviewer: Jackie Wootton

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Major Compulsory Revisions

I do feel that there is merit and potential interest in this paper: the topic of pediatric CAM use is important and fits well with previous studies; the added interest of tracking potential chronic toxicities is novel. However, the replication or partial replication of western survey instruments are unsuited to the study population - or at least need to be contextualized as stated below. There also needs to be far greater transparency in the methodology section. I feel you have not realized the potential of the data you collected and need to do a major rewrite.

More information is needed on the methods used. This is not a random sample of patients; many hospital based studies use a convenience sample during clinics but this should be clearly stated. Also the sample size should be stated in the Methods section.

It is inappropriate to refer to the instrument as a "well structured interview" without providing more information on how the "questionnaire was developed from the various studies on use of CAM". The major questionnaires used in the US (and I recognize many aspects of previous instruments here) are not necessarily appropriate for use in non-western countries where complementary and alternative medicine have a different denotation, and also connotation. I would have been interested in background information on the place of traditional (ie indigenous) practices in Nigeria.

Can you make the instrument available for future review?

You state that multivitamins appear to be the leading biological CAM used. I question whether the use of multivitamins can be classified as CAM - possibly mega-dose vitamins could be. Again, background of traditional practices is needed to put this into context otherwise this finding seems trivial.

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.