Reviewer’s report

Title: A qualitative study of naturopathy in rural practice: A focus upon naturopaths’ experiences and perceptions of rural patients and demands for their services

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Reviewer: Tini Gruner

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Review of ‘A qualitative study of naturopathy in rural practice: A focus upon naturopaths’ experiences and perceptions of rural patients and demands for their services’ by JL Wardle, J Adams and C-W Lui

This paper addresses an area of health care commonly overlooked. Health services of any kind are generally scarcer in rural areas than in urban settings, and their investigation has merit. Further exploration, as outlined by the authors, will be able to build on the work reported here regarding the issues faced by naturopaths setting up in rural practice.

Yet this work goes beyond what naturopaths face in rural practice. How to develop rapport with a country population, their values in comparison to city dwellers, how to engage them in their own wellbeing or healing journey is valuable information for any health practitioner who has chosen to live and work rurally.

What has been clearly demonstrated is the perceived value rural residents place on naturopathy, as demonstrated by the fact that the demand for naturopaths remains high even in areas well serviced by conventional medicine. One recommendation would be, perhaps for future research, to expand on the type of work naturopaths do in areas of restricted accessibility of residents to conventional medical services, in comparison to areas well serviced by doctors.

The title seems long but explains well what the paper entails. The research presented here has been described clearly and succinctly and adheres to how such findings would normally be presented. The paper is well referenced, considering the scarcity of research in this field, particularly in Australia. The discussion integrates the findings of this research well with the literature.

Dr Tini Gruner

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.