Reviewer's report

Title: Patterns of medical pluralism among adults: results from the 2001 National Health Interview Survey in Taiwan

Version: 5 Date: 31 March 2010

Reviewer: Deepa Rao

Reviewer's report:

I thank the authors for addressing some of my concerns made in an earlier review. However there are a few concerns which have not been addressed adequately and I will detail them in the following sections.

Please number your comments and divide them into

-Major Compulsory Revisions

1. There are grammatical errors throughout the manuscript particularly in the sections which have been added following the reviewers comments. These will need to be addressed. One example is in the abstract, the background section. The sentence starting with ‘Because the increasing concern…… medical pluralism, will need to be rephrased. Perhaps change it to ‘A population based survey to investigate medical pluralism was conducted among a selected Taiwanese population due to concerns about the increasing use of CAM worldwide.’

2. The background section still requires substantial revision. It is unclear how Oriental medicine is different from Traditional Chinese Medicine. The information on prevalence of TCM use among white-collar Caucasians in Taiwan has been presented. But it is unclear how or why this is relevant? Need to include information on prevalence of TCM use among the general Taiwanese population. This has not been provided. This information was provided in the cover letter but it has not been included in the background section. The need for this study is still not clear. If the concern is the interaction between TCM and WM then this needs to be clear upfront. Specific examples would be appropriate here rather than in the Discussion section. A statement has been included on a small scale study reporting on MP in Taiwan ten years ago (Reference 21). The results of this study needs to be presented in the background section.

3. Grammar issues in the Methods section. Example last line on page 6 ‘In fact, all Taiwanese residents are (not were) eligible to…. NHI system. On page 7, the third line ‘In this study, people who deny claiming their NHI medical records may be due to privacy’ – that should be in the discussion section. The next sentence, ‘According to the health authority conducted…….denied claiming their NHI medical records – should be rephrased. As written it is unclear.

4. Definitions and measures. Rephrase sentence to ‘We have defined MP, TCM
and FT in the following section. Provide the definitions. After these definitions, include another statement ‘The definitions of classification (not clarification) of urbanization and unhealthy lifestyle’ are as follows. A reference needs to be provided for the classification of urbanization. The reference was provided in the cover letter but not in the main manuscript. Similarly there needs to be an explanation for why smoking, alcohol use and areca chewing were chosen as unhealthy lifestyles. Once again an explanation and reference was provided in the cover letter but not in the manuscript.

5. In the Discussion section, it is still not clear how physician density led to the conclusion that 1 in 3 people were dissatisfied with WM medicine. This data has not been presented in the results section. Was a specific question on satisfaction with services asked in the survey? Also information on physician density is repeated again on page 15. It is unclear why the reference (Campion) on reasons for choice of unconventional medicine has been provided. Were those reasons observed in this study as well?

6. Page 15, unclear why some data was not shown but is being discussed in the discussion section. If it is important enough to be discussed then the results should be included.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'