Reviewer's report

Title: Randomized trials in China: How many are randomized?

Version: 4 Date: 23 February 2009

Reviewer: Janice Pogue

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting paper that has greatly improved in this draft. The authors should be congratulated on their impressive efforts. The tables are helpful and the result section is easy to follow. I have only a few minor comments that would improve this paper.

Minor comments:

The authors comment that there is no difference in authenticity rates for traditional Chinese medicine versus conventional medicine by type of research setting. However, they have not tested for an interaction of these two factors. Presenting comparisons within each research setting is not a substitute for an interaction test. I don’t think that a statistically significant interaction does exist, but it would be important to perform the test.

The tables and figure need footnotes to define their abbreviations (e.g. TC, CM).

Authors do not comment strongly enough about the very low rates of authenticity of randomization for these supposedly “randomized” trials. Rates of 18.7%, 11.8% and 1.3% (university/college, level 3 or level 2 or lower hospitals) are all very low. More emphasis on this point is needed.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.