Reviewer’s report

Title: What is in the drug packet? Access and use of non-prescribed poly-pharmaceutical packs (Yaa Chud) in the community in Thailand

Version: 0 Date: 03 May 2019

Reviewer: Matthew Kelly

Reviewer's report:

This is a very interesting paper addressing an important topic in Thailand, access to non-prescribed medications by non-trained community members. The paper is clear and well argued. I like the use of the conceptual framework and it helped in interpreting the findings. I have a few comments that should be addressed by the authors:

1. The term self-medication is not defined in sufficient detail. Self-medication can cover a large range of practices including use of non-prescribed pharmaceuticals, to the use of alternative medicines to the use of illicit drugs. The authors need to make clear exactly what they are including in their definition, or use a different term.

2. Where Thai language terms are used, and if the journal format permits, they should also be defined in Thai script. This will make definitions clearer for the audience of Thai people. Examples include yaa chud itself, as well as yaa antarai and so on.

3. In lines 75-77 the authors describe a list of factors related to self-medication. But we are left to guess at how these factors interact with self-medication, ie do some of these factors encourage more medication, do some of them encourage less self-medication. The authors just provide a list of factors.

4. The participants in the study are described well, but their actual recruitment isn't. Particularly for the community members, how were they approached and asked to be part of the study? What information on confidentiality and so on were they given before agreeing to participate? Did researchers call them and ask for participation by phone? This also applies to the grocery store owners. I imagine it may be quite a sensitive topic to ask to interview people about provision of non-legal medications. How was this handled?

4. In the conceptual framework the delineation of the different factor levels moving across the framework is good. But i think it is pre-judging the results of the research to put being elderly or a migrant worker as a pre-disposing factor. These are research results, not pre-defined pre-disposing factors. Examples of demographic characteristics could be provided but left undefined. So you could have age as a demographic factor without saying elderly.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Yes

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Not relevant to this manuscript

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