Reviewer's report

**Title:** Frequency and Co-prescription Pattern of Chinese Herbal Products for Hypertension in Taiwan: a cohort study

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 16 March 2015

**Reviewer:** Wendy Wong

**Reviewer's report:**

Major Compulsory Revisions

This study aim at investigating the prescription patterns of Taiwan population of those diagnosed of Hypertension.

1) The study aim at investigating the prescription pattern of Taiwan population of those who are diagnosed of hypertensions with the treatment of Chinese Herbal medicine. Therefore, the representative of the sample becomes the most crucial to the study. These patients could be identified only if their main complaints or diagnoses were made with valid qualification or the treatment is hypertensive oriented. To both extend, I did not see a well justification of this study to answer the research question. The diagnoses of ICD is included as an identifier, but how accurate of the Chinese Medicine Practitioners (CMP) were trained to give such diagnoses, please justify in Taiwan medical practice. On the other hand, the main complaints that presented with CMP are totally different with the concept of “hypertension” found in Western Medicine context. The study should justify both disciplines with the mapping concept of this disease. From my understanding, the patients consulting CMP with the symptoms like “hyperactivity of liver yang” should be introduced. Therefore, please kindly justify how representative of the method and the sample in representing the prescription pattern.

2) Background, the control of SBP and DBP within the range of 140/90 should be within a certain period of time. Please justify

3) What is the implication of the study, how can it inform the practice or policy level?

4) Please quote the ethics approval of this study.

5) Please describe in details how Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is treating hypertension.

6) The association between TCM and WM in hypertension should be identified and described.

7) Please explain why not using the National Classification system on diseases based in China for diagnoses of Chinese Medicine.

8) Data Analysis: What is the reference level of support factor and the confidence
factor? 2.6-5.1% is a very low level of correlation.

9) What is the common anti-hypertensive drug used in Taiwan? With the finding of the prescription pattern found, what is the possible herb-drug interaction that the literature suggested?

To sum up, the study should illustrate a well-informed background of practice of WM and TCM in Taiwan and then how the hypertensive patients are seeking consultation from the CMP and extract the appropriate sample from the insurance database. With only the use of ICD-9, may not be representative enough for the research. This must be stratified in this study as the most important issue.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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