Reviewer’s report

Title: What has been the impact of the Traditional Herbal Registration (THR) Scheme in the UK on information provided with herbal products bought over the counter?

Version: 0 Date: 20 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Heather Boon

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper. It is nice to see an evaluation of the practical impact of changes in policy. I provide a number of comments and suggestions that I hope will strengthen the paper.

1. Abstract, results - the phrase "products containing frequency of risk of harm" is confusing; perhaps re-word to "products with frequency of risk of harm information".

2. Methods, study design, first sentence - "…to undertake a content analysis of five herbal products" suggests you are analyzing the actual contents of the pills; to clarify you might re-phrase as "…to undertake a content analysis of the information provided with five herbal products"

3. Methods, study design - the inclusion criteria state "evidence of a drug interaction between the herb and a prescribed medication"; yet, I don't believe echinacea fits this criterion (and your Figure 1 appears to confirm this). Please explain why it was included in the study.

4. Methods, study design - you do not use Latin binomials to refer to the herbs so could you clarify that you if are including all types of echinacea and ginseng (this is especially important for ginseng as there are multiple different plants with different safety profiles and your Figure 1 clarifies you are using the safety profile for Asian ginseng (Panax ginseng) which would not be accurate for a Siberian ginseng (Eleutherococcus senticosus) product). How did you account for the different types of ginseng?

5. Results - the majority of the results are presented in the positive (i.e., the number of percentage of products reporting safety information); however, occasionally this is reversed and reported as the number of products NOT reporting safety information (e.g., p12 "11 out of 27 leaflets" did not present any information of frequency…") which is confusing. I recommend all results be reported in the positive for clarity.

6. Results, nature of products - how does the 67 products in this study compare with the number of products found last time? Was there a big difference in brands (i.e., did some leave the market place while new ones entered or are all the product brands the same?)

7. Results, information provided, line 53-54, "The THR registration scheme was associated with
an increased likelihood of the presence of a leaflet" - shouldn't this more correctly be phrased as "Registration with the THR registration scheme was associated with an increased likelihood of the presence of a leaflet"?

8. I noted a few typos and grammatical errors that I have listed here:
   a. garlic is generally lower case throughout, but Echinacea, Ginkgo and Ginseng are often capitalized….. since you are not using Latin binomials, I believe they should all be lower case.
   b. Discussion, page 12, line 43 - "..... consumers should be reassured that the THR registered products accompanied with improved and more complete information ....." Perhaps change to ""..... consumers should be reassured that the THR registered products are usually accompanied with improved and more complete information ....."
   c. Discussion, page 13, lines 6-7, phrase "regarded to be" is repeated twice; insert "be" before "available as food supplements."

**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?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.
Yes

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