Reviewer’s report

Title: Prevalence, and health- and sociodemographic associations for visits to traditional and complementary medical providers in the seventh survey of the Tromsø Study

Version: 1 Date: 06 May 2019

Reviewer: Carolina Ung

Reviewer's report:

Dear authors,

I appreciate the opportunity to review your manuscript again.

However, the justification and significance of the study remain uncertain. Why is it important to investigate the differences in the characteristics between users of TH and users of other CAM modalities in northern Norway? What prompted the need for such study?

The findings of this study does not fully support: "As the municipality of Tromsø also have a Sami population and the TH is influenced by Sami folk medicine, the findings in this study might be valid also for other areas in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia with a Sami population."

The statement is unclear: "These differences found shows that collapsing the associations for TH use and for other CAM approaches not traditionally practiced in the current country into one entity, as suggested by the WHO (Traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM), can undermine the true associations for TH and other CAM modalities."

The findings of this study does not fully support: "To be able to offer patient-centred health care, conventional health care providers should ask patients about their use of TH and other CAM modalities separately."

The rationale for the study method to address the objective of this study, the inclusion and exclusion criteria of participants, and "total birth cohorts" and "representative population samples" in the statement remain unclear: "The Tromsø Study is an ongoing longitudinal population-based cohort study among adult inhabitants in the municipality of Tromsø in northern Norway. Seven surveys have been conducted between 1974 and 2016 where total birth cohorts
as well as representative population samples have been invited to participate with response rates varying from 65-79%.

The rationale for the questions selected from the Tromso Study remain unclear. Why were self-reported health, gender, age, education, income, religiosity and ethnicity the only variables included in this study?

Because I still have doubts about the fore-mentioned items, I cannot fully review the Discussion and the Conclusion at this stage.

best regards

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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