

# Review of: "Effect of Animal-Assisted Activities on Symptoms and Emotions of Children with Neoplastic Disease: A Systematic Review with Meta-Analysis"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Dear authors,

You made an interesting review of a topic of growing interest. The methodological aspects of your research are of high quality. I just want to share with you some considerations:

Page 2, line 3: I would delete the term "complicated".

Page 2, line 11: I think that what can alleviate symptoms, manage and control negative emotions, promote positive ones, and improve the child's perceived quality of life can be the use of alternative therapies. Rather than their exploration, therefore, I would delete this word.

Page 4, line 2: Could you please better specify what you mean by "quantitative synthesis"?

Page 11, line 1: Could you please add the references of the two articles where the risk of bias was of some concern?

Page 12, line 3: I suggest you reword the sentence with "mood, or discomfort" to be consistent with the outcomes list you put in the Methods section (page 4, line 20).

Page 15, lines 17-30: Here you named various sources of heterogeneity. In particular, from line 23, you listed sources other than clinical aspects. Anyway, I guess that points a and b (a – the role of the handler; and b) the description of standard of care) can be underlined as limitations of the included studies, rather than sources of heterogeneity since all the studies presented these issues.

Page 16, line 14: I think it would be better to specify "AAAs in pediatric oncology".

Page 16, line 14: You assert that "there are strong indications of their benefits", but this seems to be in contrast with the level of current evidence you revealed in your review.

Page 16, line 29: Here you state that: "perhaps efforts could be made to borrow some aspects of TAAs". Could you give some examples?

