Reviewer's report

Title: The reduction of tuberculosis risks by smoking cessation

Version: 2 Date: 23 March 2010

Reviewer: Richard van Zyl-Smit

Reviewer's report:

Summary
The manuscript has been substantially improved from all aspects (data presentation, language, and discussion. There remain a few grammatical errors and some corrections required to the discussion.

Major Compulsory revisions
Nil

Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract
Page 2 “conclusions” line 2 “became close to” this could be better phrased as: “was similar to…”

Methods
Page 5 Paragraph 3 line 3 “diabetes” should be “diabetics”

Results:
Page 8 Paragraph 2 “there was a reversed relationship ….” This sentence could be better written: suggest “A lower BMI was associated with higher reported TB history”.

Discussion
Page 10 line 1 sentence “smokers had a very high TB mortality as many…” “as many” should be replaced with “as much”. As in the abstract suggest replacing “and became close to” with “was similar with”. Note: same in final conclusion paragraph.

Page 14 paragraph 2
The discussion about the reasons for the increased mortality should be written as hypotheses as they are not proven: for example “COPD plays an important role” rephrase as “COPD may play an important role”… sme for rest of paragraph...

Mid paragraph the sentence beginning with “As a large… “change “worsens” to “impairs”
Sentence “at the same time…” mid sentence change to “the severity of disease may be aggravated and lead to increased mortality…”

Ref 31,32 these references are for previously published data to which you are comparing your data – either make this comparison clear by adding a sentence or two, such as "Similar observations have been previously reported" or remove the references as they are out of place after your data.

Page 15 second paragraph
This section is confusing – the authors indicate that they are the first to report an association between TB and diabetes then report a systematic review on the subject? Please clarify.

Conclusions page 17
As indicated earlier – change “as many as” to “as much as” and “became close to” with “was similar to”

Discretionary Revisions
It might be worth referencing the paper by Lin and colleagues Lancet 2008. They computer modelled the impact of smoking cessation and solid fuel usage on COPD,TB etc – They showed a reduced mortality for COPD and Lung cancer and reduced incidence of TB – they however did not report on TB mortality – this data that the authors now present fills in this gap and has major relevance to public health interventions as they suggest.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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