Reviewer’s report

Title: Infection control and the burden of tuberculosis infection and disease in health care workers in China: A cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 11 August 2010

Reviewer: Wendy A Cronin

Reviewer’s report:

Review – authors
Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript. The authors conducted a carefully executed cross-sectional study of latent tuberculosis (TB) infection and TB disease among health care workers in Henan province, China, where MDR-TB rates are high. Infection control practices were poor to nil. Authors found that older workers, workers with a longer duration of employment, and workers at TB centers and inpatient units had higher rates of latent TB infection. TB disease rates among health care workers were nearly 3 times greater than among administrative staff.

While more global attention needs to be focused on strengthening TB infection control measures such as availability of N95 masks, proper environmental actions, and employee and patient training, I do not believe this manuscript adds to the current body of knowledge. In addition, the study is 5 years old (2005), and the findings regarding infection control practices may be out of date for Henan Province, China.

Specific comments:

1. Page 5, Study design: Suggest providing background TB risk information about Henan province (such as % MDR-TB) in your introduction. No need to justify in Methods.
2. Page 5-6, Study population and sampling: This section could be summarized.
3. Page 7, Quality control: this section nicely demonstrates careful planning and study execution.
4. Page 11, Results: The division of groups (female, male smokers, male non-smokers) is understandable. However, please report in the text the proportion of females who smoke.
5. Page 11, Discussion: First paragraph can be summarized. You do not need to repeat detailed findings in the discussion. The last sentence is useful, as it adds to the results data.
6. Page 13, first paragraph: Older hospitals in Peru were shown to have greater ventilation than a modern building with mechanical ventilation. You do not address this when you mention older buildings.
7. Page 13, first paragraph: Suggest you would have a more informative study if you compare current practices and results with your results in this project. What
interventions have been conducted and did the TB infection and disease decline?


**Level of interest:** An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

**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.