Reviewer's report

Title: Factors associated with delayed treatment of tuberculosis in hospitalized patients: a retrospective cohort study.

Version: 2 Date: 8 January 2012

Reviewer: Susanna Sophia van Wyk

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

METHODS:
1. With regard to laboratory turn-around time. I assume that the 2 hours, mentioned at the end of paragraph 2, apply to direct tests only and not culture. Extra-pulmonary TB and sputum smear negative TB (the two main factors associated with diagnostic delay) are usually diagnosed on culture. What is the average turn-around time for culture (Löwenstein-Jensen medium) in your laboratory?

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

RESULTS:
2. Third paragraph, first sentence: According to table 1 “Cough and night sweats were more common in patients with a diagnosis in less than 6 days...” Why do you say “less than 24h”?

DISCUSSION:
3. First sentence: Change “retrospective study” to “cross sectional study” or just remove “retrospective”.
4. Paragraph 6: “...less than 24 hours after admission” is not consistent with the results. Should this not be “...less than 6 hours”?

Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

ABSTRACT:
5. Background, third sentence: Remove the “Then” in front of the sentence.

RESULTS:
6. Paragraphs two to four are duplication of Table 1. I would suggest highlighting only the factors that are significantly associated with delay in the text.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
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