Reviewer’s report

Title: Long-term dominance of Mycobacterium tuberculosis Uganda family in peri-urban Kampala-Uganda is not associated with increased virulence.

Version: 2 Date: 20 August 2013

Reviewer: Mark Nicol

Reviewer’s report:

In this manuscript Wampande and colleagues describe the long-term dominance of a particular strain lineage of M. tuberculosis (the Uganda family) in Kampala over two decades and attempt to account for this dominance by evaluating the association between strain lineage and cavitary disease. The authors found no such association.

Minor essential revisions:
1. Since the propensity to cause cavitary disease is only one, very particular, measure of virulence, it might be better to avoid making generic statements about virulence (e.g., perhaps the title should refer to cavitary disease rather than virulence).
2. More detail is required regarding the sampling framework. Did these represent all isolates in the study area over the period? How were participants selected? Did this differ between the two studies?
3. Were all isolates from a household or just one per household included?
4. For how many isolates was the SNP assay confirmed by LSP-PCR?
5. Was there potential bias introduced when excluding patients for whom clinical information was lacking? Specifically, was the strain distribution similar amongst included and excluded patients?
6. What measure of virulence was used in the previous small study referred to in reference 20?

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