Reviewer's report

Title: Decreasing household contribution to TB transmission with age: a retrospective geographic analysis of young people in a South African township

Version: 3  Date: 18 December 2013

Reviewer: Gerald H Friedland

Reviewer's report:

This is an excellent article on an important issue in TB in resource limited high prevalence settings. It provides new information supporting community based TB transmission to adolescents, as opposed to household transmission in younger age children. The methods are retrospective and but sound and results are warranted and make good sense. The discussion and conclusion flow clearly from the study results. Although the data is retrospective and there are limitations, the study provides a stimulus to identify sites of transmission of TB to adolescents in community rather than household settings and, therefore, carries a practical policy and practice message.

If space allows, I would suggest including figures demonstrating TST positive and negative results in younger children related to smear positive adult TB cases, to contrast visually with figure 1 a and b in adolescents. I think this would give the reader a more vivid appreciation of the differences in results by age displayed in table 1

A minor correction: Results, Prevalent TB infections, line 3. I believe a word is missing and sentence should read "Of these children and adolescents, 480......"

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests