Reviewer's report

Title: Treatment outcomes from community-based drug resistant tuberculosis treatment programs: a systematic review and meta-analysis

Version: 3 Date: 14 April 2014

Reviewer: Cho Naing

Reviewer's report:

Weiss and colleagues present a revised manuscript entitled “Treatment outcomes from community-based drug resistant tuberculosis treatment programs: a systematic review and meta-analysis”

I recognize that the authors have well addressed almost all comments. However, the work will be much better if the authors can clarify the methodological assessment of the studies which are included in their manuscript. This comment reflects to the authors# statement that they have assessed the methodological quality of the studies using methodology similar to the previously published high-quality systematic reviews in this area.

Minor essential revisions

1. Methods. Please, add (Appendix C ?)

The present review have been reported according............. (PRISMA) (Appendix C).

Supplementary information

PRISMA guidelines (Appendix C ?)

"Title# of this manuscript is vacant in the PRISMA checklist. Please, provide the title of this manuscript.

2. Methods

Validity of assessment

It will be better to state “Methodological assessment” OR “Risk of bias assessment” instead of “validity assessment”, following the PRISMA checklist.

I am understanding that the authors have assessed the methodological quality of the studies which they selected for this systematic review and meta-analysis, using the criteria applied in the previously published high-quality systematic reviews in this area. It will be better to provide the references here. For example, Johnston et al., 2009, Orenstein et al., 2009, Ahuja et al, 2012 ?.

The authors have indicated # 5 patients. If the authors followed the same criterion of “at least 10 patients”, how many studies met this criterion?

It will be better to provide number or % of studies which have been carried out with #10 or #5 patients (according to the authors criterion for number of patients) in “Results”. This information will be helpful for further assessment of the quality
of included studies.

Suggestions:

Please, use an appropriate subheading
e.g Methodological assessment/ Risk of bias assessment/ ....

Two authors (P.W and J.J) independently assessed the methodological quality of the selected studies considered in the current review. The criteria for the quality assessment were brought over from the previously published high-quality systematic reviews in this area. (Give the citation here. e.g Johnston et al, 2009, Orenstein et al , 2009, Ahuja et al, 2012.). We categorized a study as “high quality “ if the study:

(i) assessed case studies of at least 10 patients. (Is this correct for the current review?)

(ii) had a design of prospective cohort, retrospective consecutive cohort, consecutive case control or randomized control,

(iii) reported an average treatment duration of ?12 months with an average follow-up duration of ?18 months. (is it correct for the current review?)

(iv) reported basic demographic data, and

(v) reported less than ##% default or lost to follow-up.

In a case of duplicate data, the publication with the more detailed reports on treatment outcomes was included for meta-analysis.

3. Results:

Please, use an appropriate subheading.
e.g Risk of bias across studies

# randomized controlled trials, # prospective cohorts, # retrospective cohorts or consecutive case-control studies were included. All studies (is it correct?) included in this analysis reported outcomes of treatment for # 5 patients, reported results on at least 50% of patients, reported general demographic information on patients, and included community-based treatment of #6 months duration.

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'.