Reviewer's report

**Title:** A group of novel serum proteins is associated with the pathological changes of pulmonary tuberculosis

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 8 November 2013

**Reviewer:** Robert Wallis

**Reviewer's report:**

This manuscript examined levels of C4b, fibronectin, PEPD and other serum proteins in 115 TB patients and 39 healthy controls. The main findings were that C4b and PEPD were increased in TB in proportion to radiographic extent of disease. The relatively large sample size is a strength.

**Major questions:**

1. The inclusion criteria appear to indicate that pleural TB alone was sufficient for inclusion. However the classification according to radiographic extent of disease appeared to indicate all subjects had pulmonary disease.

2. What was the reason for including the additional 72 TB patients whose blood was not sampled?

3. Table 2 states it shows results of a one sample t test of TB patients vs. the median of the normal reference range. The medians are not given. The P values seem exaggerated, particularly since most of the TB means fall within the normal range. See, for example, triglyceride values.

4. Table 3 would benefit from including radiographic extent of disease.

5. Figure 3 would benefit from having regression lines drawn. It is difficult for me to see significant relationships in many of the graphs.

6. Table 4 probably should not include correlations of a numeric value with a binary one (yes/no). These are better analyzed by t test.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I have no competing interests.