Reviewer's report

Title: Tuberculosis burden in China: a cross-sectional analysis in the household contacts of tuberculosis patients

Version: 3 Date: 16 October 2013

Reviewer: Juliet Sekandi

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions
1) The title could be revised to make it more descriptive and informative to the reader e.g “Tuberculosis burden in China: A high prevalence of TB in household contacts with and without symptoms

Major compulsory Revision
2) The interpretation in line 187-189 is not accurate so it must be corrected: Patients presenting with symptoms were 14 times more likely to transmit PTB to their family members than those without symptoms. this is not true ---- The results refer to the contacts being likely to be a TB cases, it has nothing to do with transmitting PTB to family members. Moreover, this only an association, we cannot infer causation because molecular genotyping was not done in this study to ascertain if the contact has actually been infected by the index symptomatic persons, we know that some contacts with TB have been found to get infected from non-household sources (Whalen C, 2011, Secondary Attack Rate of TB, Buu, TN, 2010, TB acquired outside the household).

3) It would be helpful to show the crude odds ratios in table 2 in order to get a real sense for presence of Confounding - Minor Essential Revisions

4) Should spell out AOR in Table 2

Minor Essential Revisions
5) For Table 1 Include in the table title the years over which the data were collected

6) Table 2; It's not clear what the first column labeled number represents - Minor Essential Revisions

7) Complete the 65yr category by adding the highest age - Minor Essential Revisions

8) Clarify category “Whether sleeping in the same room”- dose this mean sleeping or merely living in the same room or house - Minor Essential Revisions

Highlight the significant results in bold or with asterisk so that they are easier to find - Minor Essential Revisions

Discretionary Revisions:
9) In future molecular techniques could be employed to expand our understanding on transmission dynamics between index cases and contacts. These could show whether the mycobacteria that infected the index case matches that found in the case contact. This may be beyond the scope of this study but its something to think about.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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