Reviewer's report

Title: Clinical characteristics and management of patients with tuberculous pericarditis in Africa in the HIV era

Version: 2 Date: 25 October 2005

Reviewer: Lesley LJ Burgess

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting and ambitious project which deals with a very topical issue. This is an observational study. The conclusions are not supported by the data. Although the authors do mention the shortcomings of the study design, this should be taken into account when drawing conclusions from such a study design.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1. The authors describe the methodology for indirect tests (eg ADA) but these results are not presented. Given that the laboratory diagnosis is difficult in this group of patients, it would be beneficial to be able to view the clinical culture results.
2. The details of treatment that these patients received is not specified in terms of drug or route. As this is a fairly contentious issue, this information would be of interest.
3. In the methodology, the authors mention that patients were followed up for a period of 6-12 months. This data is not presented in the results section.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
1. Methodology, page 4, paragraph 2: adenosine deaminase is spelt incorrectly.
2. The format of the references: the titles should not be bolded.
3. Table 4 is missing a legend to explain the symbols used.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.