Reviewer's report

Title: Transmission of Specific Genotype Streptomycin Resistant Strains of Mycobacterium tuberculosis in the Tokyo Metropolitan Area in Japan

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Reviewer: Mark Nicol

Reviewer's report:

The authors describe the molecular and epidemiological investigation of the spread of an outbreak strain of M. tuberculosis in the greater Tokyo Metropolitan Area. The authors identified a further 46 isolates, with a tentative association between a subgroup of these isolates and use of internet cafes. This study appears to have been well conducted and the analysis is appropriate.

1. A significant limitation of this investigation is that the epidemiological investigation appears to have been limited to strains sharing the same or closely related genotype to the outbreak strain, which limits the ability to draw conclusions as to the specific risk factors for acquisition of this strain. The authors should highlight this limitation in the manuscript (minor essential revision).

2. This strain was associated with younger age of patients, compared to non-outbreak strains. This is of interest, since another group in Vietnam has described an association between Beijing strains (this strain belongs to this family) and younger age. This reinforces the perception that this strain family tends to cause outbreaks and may be associated with more rapid progression to disease. The authors may wish to comment on this further in the manuscript (discretionary revision).

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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