Reviewer's report

Title: Outcome of Tuberculosis (TB) in a low incidence area: a 4-year study in Geneva, Switzerland

Version: 1 Date: 5 June 2009

Reviewer: bernard vandercam

Reviewer's report:

Background

- Line 1: 9 million cases: do you mean new cases? Could you specify new cases?

Patients and methods

In a paper about outcome of tuberculosis, I think that more details should be provided about treatment regimen.

- Four-drug regimen (INH, RMP, PZA, EMB) or three-drug regimen (INH, RMP, PZA)?
- What about DOT? Twice-weekly regimen or three times weekly regimen? Dosage?
- What is the incidence INH resistance in your population?

Results

Patients

- Lines 2 – 5 – 6: for age, what is the real range? 15 or 16 – 91 or 92?
- About the foreign-born patients, what was the duration of stay in Switzerland? New arrival? Or long term resident?
- HIV co-infection: mode of acquisition?
- Systematic screening of asylum seekers: do you mean X-ray?
- HIV co-infection: how many patients were treated by HAART?

Treatment and side-effects

- Line 2: according to your paper, side effects were reported in fifteen percent of the patients and in 2/3 of these cases (for me 10%), there were due to liver test abnormalities. However, biological hepatitis was reported in 6% and not 10%?
- Neurological symptoms: more details should be given about neurological symptoms: CNS toxicity? polyneuritis?
Diagnosis and diagnostic procedures

- Please could you give more details about procedures: bronchoscopy: brushing? washing? biopsy? post bronchoscopy sputum?

Outcome

- What was the treatment success in MDR TB (5 cases)?
- What was the outcome for difficult-to-reach population?

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.