Reviewer's report

Title: Clinical and Ultrasonographic Features of Abdominal Tuberculosis in HIV Positive Adults in Zambia

Version: 1 Date: 3 December 2008

Reviewer: Lucio casali

Reviewer's report:

1) Major Compulsory revisions: none
2) Minor Essential revisions: none
3) Discretionary revisions:
   
   The work looks really fine and very interesting considering the difficulties in setting a correct diagnosis in the particular field of abdominal TB not only in Zambia but practically everywhere.

   The admission criteria are probably too narrow but this work has probably been designed in the aim to obtain solid and reliable information.

   My only personal doubt is represented by the specific weight assigned to diarrhea that in particular countries could be endemic or strongly prevalent independently from the presence of an abdominal TB with or without a co-infection with HIV.

   Another point of possible criticism is the count of CD4 that seems much lower in these cases in comparison to that reported elsewhere (citation n.21 in the list of reference). However, this difference could be ascribed to a possible selection bias regarding these patients who are hospitalized and probably in more severe condition.

   On the basis of these results in the future it might be useful to proceed to a new and wider investigation aimed to evaluate earlier stages of HIV and TB co-infection at abdominal level.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests below