Reviewer’s report

Title: Screening for Latent Tuberculosis Infection in Haemodialysis Patients

Version: 1 Date: 3 July 2009

Reviewer: Robert J Wilkinson

Reviewer’s report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   Yes

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   Yes

3. Are the data sound?
   Yes

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   With some exceptions (see below)

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   Reasonably so

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   Yes

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
   I think the title would be more accurate if changed to 'Risk factors for...' rather than 'screening for...'

9. Is the writing acceptable?
   Could be improved. See details below.

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. Why was the skin test repeated at a higher dose? Repeated skin tests lead to
boosting as the authors indeed found. Thus the recommendation that an annual skin test be performed has to be qualified and alternatives (such as interferon gamma release assays) need to be discussed.

2. Throughout the manuscript prevalence is incorrectly used: it is incidence that is described, not prevalence.

3. The phrase 'all efforts were made for bacteriological and/or histological confirmation' is vague. A breakdown of how incident cases were diagnosed should be provided.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. Spelling of Zinc throughout
2. Define the age considered to be elderly
3. Delete 'the' in line 3 of the introduction: not necessary
4. Be careful with tense (e.g. in methods 'This is a prospective...' should be changed to past tense)
5. Define abbreviations Kt/V and PRU
6. page 5 line 1 'the' is unnecessary
7. Spelling of nephroangiosclerosis
8. State why patients on corticosteroids or immunosuppressive medications were excluded. These could constitute important risk factors.
9. Spelling weak, not week

Discretionary Revisions
1. I suggest showing the confidence limits of the RR in the abstract
2. Show significance values in Table 1?

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