Reviewer's report

Title: Factors associated with the low cure rate of tuberculosis in the remote poor areas of ShaanXi Province, China: a case control study

Version: 2 Date: 10 December 2009

Reviewer: PENG WU

Reviewer's report:

The authors made revisions based on the reviewers’ comments. Here are some further comments for the authors:

1. For the additionally included non-cured patients, I still don’t think it is a proper way to deal with the observed increased non-cure rate in terms of the study objective and study design. I therefore suggest that the authors redo the analyses after excluding the non-cured patients added to the original sample after observing an increased cure rate in the study population compared to 2005, to see if the authors could get wider confidence intervals for the parameters estimated in the model, or the final results of the analysis would change. Besides, the authors should mention the comparison of the results of the two analyses in the limitations of the study if there is no change between the new analysis and the old one.

2. There might be some errors in table 3 and 4 in terms of the alignment and/or the values of P-value, especially the P-values in the table 4. Please check them again carefully.

3. Based on the reply to the third comment in the first review, “There was no significant difference between non-cure (rates) for those with a doctor or family member as treatment observer, as the confidence intervals overlap” is not a correct way to interpret the results of the statistical analysis and justify the conclusion the author drew in the paper.

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.