Reviewer's report

Title: Factors associated with excessively lengthy treatment of tuberculosis in the eastern Paris region of France in 2004.

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Reviewer: Douglas Fraser Wares

Reviewer's report:

General comments
The authors investigated to factors associated with excessively lengthy treatment of TB in patients residing in a major city of a low TB burden country. They found a significant proportion of patients receive an excessively long treatment duration and list out the associated factors that they found. The findings are of interest, although only to a limited audience.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Abstract
1. Results: The authors need to make it clearer to readers what the term “..living in precarious conditions..” actually means.

In the Abstract, the median age is given as 36.0±15.2 years, whereas in Table 1 it is given as 36±13.5 years. This needs correcting.

Results
Page 5, 4th paragraph, 2nd sentence: In the text, the figure of 104 is given for the total of cases with isolated thoracic TB. However in Table 2, this figure is 114. The authors need to correct this inconsistency.

Discussion
1st paragraph, 1st sentence: The sentence mentions WHO guidelines. However none of the 3 references given refer to WHO guidelines. This needs to be corrected and would suggest that the authors could include the 2010 WHO Treatment Guidelines 4th Edition in the list of references.

2nd paragraph, 1st sentence: Is it appropriate here to use a reference which reports on the treatment of latent TB infection, when discussing excessively long treatment of active disease?

2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence: However although longer treatment may be more costly, there is evidence, especially in HIV-associated TB, that this may result in lower rates of relapse. This the authors themselves state in the 3rd paragraph on the same page.

4th paragraph, 1st sentence: Authors need to consider that most treatment guidelines issued recommend longer than 6 months of treatment for previously treated patients.
4th paragraph, 4th sentence: The authors discuss about French guidelines in the sentence, whereas the reference 5. refers to the ATS guidelines. This needs amending by the authors.

Tables
Table 1: Inconsistencies in figures between Tables 1 and 2 need to be corrected by the authors. Total for “Excessive” is 162 in Table 1 but 169 in Table 2. Figures for Isolated thoracic TB “Correct” is 172 in Table 1 but 165 in Table 2. And for “Excessive” 107 in Table 1, but 114 in Table 2.
Table 3: Is the term “.. according to management modalities” the most appropriate phrase? Total for “Excessive” is given as 162 in Table 3, but 169 in Table 2.
The meaning of “Number of structures per patient” is unclear and needs making clearer for the reader’s better understanding.

Minor Essential Revisions
Discussion
7th paragraph, 1st sentence: Suggest that authors amend the term “...in a weakly endemic country..” to “in a low incident country” or “.low prevalent country”.
8th paragraph, 3rd sentence: Suggest amending the term “..that declare..” to “..that notify..”.
8th paragraph, 6th sentence: The meaning of this sentence is somewhat unclear and the authors need to make the sentence clearer for the reader.

Discretionary Revisions
Nil

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.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests