Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 27 April 2010

Reviewer: Laura Jean Podewils

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript entitled, “Factors associated with excessively lengthy treatment of tuberculosis in the eastern Paris region of France in 2004” is clearly written, and provides a concise summary of clinical, provider, and individual characteristics associated with extended treatment among TB patients. This paper is well-organized, and the tables provide a stand-alone summary of the key findings.

The objectives of the paper address an important issue in TB control; one that is critical to understand and that can help guide interventions to strengthen the adherence to clinical guidelines for effective TB control. Excessive treatment also wastes precious healthcare resources.

The paper states the objectives clearly and the statistical methods and approach are sound and appropriate for addressing the problem of interest.

Specific comments:

- Authors may consider using “treatment duration according to guidelines” rather than “correct treatment duration” throughout.

Abstract:

- please add the definition used for “excessively lengthy” (e.g., beyond guidelines, with a quick summary of what the guidelines are)
- add a simple description of the median and range that comprised excessively lengthy treatment

Methods

- Authors state they excluded MDR TB cases – were all specimens tested for DST for first-line drugs?
  - Just want to ensure that some of the patients in the sample were not MDR TB, which might explain excessive treatment if the physician suspected drug resistance
- Was there any additional clinical information available along the treatment course (e.g., at 2 months for conversion, 6-month culture result, etc.) that might lend itself to clinicians extending treatment? If so, it would be useful to also look at these factors.
- Were patients

Results
- Please add a basic description of the median and range (and/or distribution) of treatment duration for “excessively lengthy” treatment
- It would also be useful to see the median, range of treatment duration by a few of the key characteristics (e.g., HIV)

Figure
- I would suggest amending the figure to have the box with 478 state “478 patients included in the analysis” (or similar” and then 2 additional boxes below – one with 316 “treatment duration according to guidelines” and the other with 162 “excessively lengthy treatment duration”

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

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