Author's response to reviews

Title: Management of pulmonary tuberculosis patients in an urban setting in Zambia: a patient's perspective

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Version: 4 Date: 22 November 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
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Version 3: Date: 21 November 2010

Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

Re: MS 1762972112424942 “Management of pulmonary tuberculosis patients in an urban setting in Zambia: a patient's perspective.”

We are sincerely grateful to you and the reviewers for your time and helpful comments on our manuscript. We have addressed the reviewers concerns below and updated the manuscript accordingly.

We now hope that these changes will meet the requirement for possible publication of our manuscript in BMC Public Health.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely yours,

Ms. Chanda Mulenga

Reviewer 1

Reviewer's report

Title: Management of pulmonary tuberculosis patients in an urban setting in Zambia: a patient's perspective

Version: 3 Date: 27 October 2010

Reviewer: Dag Gundersen Storla
Reviewer's report:

I find that the authors have made major improvements of their article. The only point I disagree with is that they so easily state that because the staff who made the data collection were not employed by the NTP, and did not wear nurse uniforms, they were not considered by the patients to represent the health care system. It IS always a problem with these kind of studies that it is perceived by the patients that they represent "the system". Even though they try hard to see it from the patient's perspective they cannot neglect this problem, and need to discuss it further.

1. We have included a verbiage in the limitations section to acknowledge this fact; “Lastly, it is well known that respondents usually consider the interviewer to represent authority or the healthcare system and therefore tend to bias their answers in the way they expect they should to please the interviewer. Consequently, although the study made efforts to use researchers from outside the respondents’ healthcare system, it is difficult to completely remove this perception in communities.”

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.

Reviewer 2:

Reviewer's report

Title: Management of pulmonary tuberculosis patients in an urban setting in Zambia: a patient's perspective

Version: 3 Date: 9 November 2010

Reviewer: Akihiro A Ohkado

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions:
1. Did the authors include both new and previously treated smear positive TB cases registered in Laboratory registers in the 26 health centers? The abstract says the authors made interviews to “previously treated sputum positive sputum-smear positive pulmonary TB subjects”, which did not clarify their TB types. The authors are requested to clarify whether they included both of the TB types, i.e., new and previously treated TB cases, or they included only new cases in the Sampling and Sample size part as well as in the method part of the abstract.

1. Both New and retreatment cases from the register were included. Clarifications have been made in both the Sampling and Sample size and Abstract sections.

Minor revisions:

1. There are still not-fully worded and abbreviated words exist. The abbreviated words should be worded fully when they appear first time in the text and in the affiliations. For example, “LCID/NIAID” in the affiliation part on the 1st page, “TDRC” on the 1st line under Ethical consideration part on page 10, “NDHMT” (not as “Ndola DHMT”) on the 1st line under Conclusion part on page 17.

Corrections have been made as follows:

LCID/NIAID are written full out in the affiliation part; Laboratory of Clinical Infectious Diseases/National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

NDHMT and TDRC appear the first time in the text on pages 6 and 7 respectively, and worded fully there; NDHMT is now consistently used in this way throughout the text.

NTP on page 17 is worded full out now.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.