Reviewer's report

Title: TB Tracer Teams in South Africa: Knowledge, Practices and Challenges of Tracing TB Patients to Improve Adherence

Version: 1 Date: 23 July 2013

Reviewer: Carrie Tudor

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The objective of this study is of public health importance for countries considering a similar intervention to introduce TB tracer teams as a method to improve treatment outcomes and to reduce defaulter rates. Much of the manuscript is clearly and concisely written however there are some weaknesses, particularly the low response rate.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Please provide clarification as to whether or not efforts were made to follow up with facilities or tracer team leaders to improve the response rate. Were questionnaires sent out more than once or did you call the TB managers at each facility or send reminders to complete and return the questionnaires? If so, what methods did you use?

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Please add the statistical test used for the comparisons made in Table 2. This is not described in the Analysis section.

2. Under the Analysis section paragraph 2 please clarify what is meant by “For characteristics and questions that were common...”

3. Please explain if there were differences in response rates by province or other geographic divisions (e.g. rural/urban) that may influence the generalizability of the findings?

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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 I have no competing interests.