Reviewer's report

Title: Latent Tuberculosis Infection in a Malaysian Prison: Implications for a Comprehensive Integrated Control Program in Prisons

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Reviewer: jaap veen

Reviewer's report:

This study examines the prevalence of LTBI in a Malaysian prison setting. The methodology chosen is appropriate. The data are sound, the statistical work up is well done and the conclusions based on these are correct.

I miss the finding of active TB among inmates. The study into LTBI must have led to finding active TB as well, probably more among HIV infected than non-HIV infected.

The overall conclusion that the LTBI prevalence is high needs some further discussion:

Although two studies are mentioned that compare the high prevalence of LTBI in prisons with the general population, this comparison needs some more discussion on its limitations. With an annual risk of infection of 2% in the general population a prevalence of 80% among 40 year old persons is not extraordinary. The median age among the study population was 36 years. The comparison group of HCW had a median age of 29 years and a prevalence of 52%, suggesting that the ARI is near the 2%. The IGRA study uses a different methodology and thus is not conclusive.

The fact that the overall prevalence in the Western Pacific is 36% indicates that perhaps a 2% estimated ARI is too high. This however should be commented upon. If the prevalence of the found LTBI nears that of the general population, the value of the study is limited.

Overall the manuscript follows the standards for reporting, the title and abstract are correct and the tables relevant and clear.

The discussion though is lengthy and becomes almost a textbook on TB in prisons. I suggest to revise this and only keep those aspects that are of relevance for the outcome of this particular study.

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.