Reviewer’s report

Title: A systematic review of delay in the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis

Version: 2 Date: 2 September 2007

Reviewer: Nelcy Rodríguez

Reviewer’s report:

General: It is a really important issue and as a first approximation to the problem is good to have a descriptive look of the current situation. However, there are some key points that should be clarified.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. As a systematic review, it will be useful to find in the paper besides the trial selection criteria, some other topics such as: type of participants, what treatments were mentioned in the clinical trials included, a clear definition of the primary and secondary outcomes and what was the quality assessment of the trials included.

2. Even the authors pointed that they "not excluded studies based on strict scientific", they made the studies comparable, there is an immediate question: What is the criteria for making those studies comparable? for example: It maybe possible that randomized and not randomized clinical trials were included and the outcome of interest did not have a unique definition.

3. It will be very useful to know what treatment (s) for active pulmonary TB were considered.

4. Since the outcomes of interest were diagnostic delay from the debut of symptoms to the time of diagnosis or start of treatment, it will be important to know the patient’s age considered. The mean and median as a results could be different and also more useful if presented in this way.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have
responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

**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