Reviewer's report

Title: Tuberculosis screening of travelers to higher-incidence countries: A cost-effectiveness analysis

Version: 1 Date: 31 March 2008

Reviewer: Heidi Albert

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript describes a decision analysis approach to comparison of 4 screening strategies for travellers from low TB incidence countries to countries with higher TB incidence.

The research question is very clearly defined and appropriate methods methods were used and were described in sufficient detail by the authors.

The authors used appropriate published sources of data for transition probabilities in decision analysis, and conducted sensitivity analyses for all estimated variables.

Conclusions of the analysis are supported by the data presented. Limitations are stated clearly. The title and abstract are accurate reflections of the study findings.

High quality writing and presentation of data

Minor essential revisions

1. Given the levels of drug resistance and MDR-TB in the three high burden countries included in the cost-effectiveness analysis of the screening strategies, why was the decision taken only to consider drug susceptible TB? For example, Ferdinand et al (2003) reported 8.9% MDR in Haiti, 1995 survey data in Dominican Republic reported 19.7% MDR, and 1997 survey data from Mexico reported 22.4% MDR. This could have a significant impact on the cost of treatment, effectiveness of treatment of cases, as well as prophylaxis. Reasons for exclusion of drug resistance data should be discussed.

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.