Reviewer's report

Title: Barriers for introducing HIV testing among TB patients in Jogjakarta, Indonesia

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Reviewer: Soumya Swaminathan

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

This manuscript is a report of a qualitative study examining barriers for introduction of HIV testing among TB patients in Indonesia. The authors interviewed TB patients at 88 sites providing TB services - these patients had all expressed willingness to be followed in-depth. Basically the sample is a highly selective group and there is no mention of the denominators at each level (total TB patients, those referred to VCTC, those accepted VCTC and those who accepted the interviews). More information is required on the exact time period of the study, whether the nurses information to patients about VCTC was standardized and the numbers of patients in the study population and in the sampling frame. After recruitment, again there was a big drop-out especially in group 3 and group 2 was over-represented. The results of these interviews cannot be projected as barriers for HIV testing among all TB patients as the sample is not representative. This can at best be described as a pilot study where the views of some selected patients and health care providers has been ascertained. This should ideally be followed by a larger study with a semi-structured questionnaire interviewing a larger sample of TB patients.

In Results the patient characteristics are vaguely described - exact numbers are required. The authors state that the "majority" of respondents were not interested in VCT - this conclusion is not valid based on such small numbers and with a purposive sampling strategy.

No information is provided about what aspects were included in the interview and whether there was an interview guide.

Limitations of the study need to be addressed

Discretionary Revisions

The qualitative data has been provided as quotes from the patients and health care workers and then discussed under subheadings. It would have been useful to analyze the interviews for themes and present 2 tables with the major concepts/constructs identified.

Data from the surveillance study if available will be useful to provide evidence that HIV screening in Indonesia is relevant and likely to be cost-effective.

Is ART available in Indonesia and at how many sites?
Several recent reports have addressed this issue in other populations, not all have been referenced by the authors (eg Thomas et al, IJTLID Dec 2007)

**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 that I have no competing interests