Reviewer's report

Title: Factors associated with mortality in HIV-positive and negative patients with sputum smear positive pulmonary tuberculosis receiving anti-TB therapy.

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Reviewer: Stefano Bonora

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting paper concerning a mortality analysis of HIV-positive and negative patients with sputum smear positive tuberculosis receiving anti-TB therapy in Tanzania. Most important result was that HIV is the main risk factor for mortality but most deaths occur after completion of anti-TB therapy, suggesting that mortality in HIV/TB coinfected patients in such setting was mainly due to HIV rather than to TB.

Minor Essential Revisions

In the follow up of patients no data was reported concerning relapse of TB. Authors should detailed whether data are available and discuss the possible impact on mortality, especially in the subgroup of HIV-positive subjects.

Baseline CD4+ cell count was similarly high in both survivors and not survivors Hiv-positive subjects, while CD8+ cells count was significantly higher in the latter. These patients are consequently expected to show lower CD4+ percentage and CD4+/CD8+ ratio. Authors should provide such data if available and evaluate the impact as predictors of mortality. Evaluation of CD4+ percentage was shown to be even more appropriate than simple CD4+ count as markers of immunological impairment, especially in developing countries.

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 in reviewing this paper.