Reviewer’s report

Title: Alcohol use, alcohol use disorders and incidence and disease course of tuberculosis (TB) - is there a causal connection? A systematic review.

Version: 3 Date: 31 July 2009

Reviewer: Fredrik Spak

Reviewer’s report:

I think the paper has been much improved and now is fit for publication in BMC. The topic is important and the literature review appears solid.

I still have a few comments though which can be considered as discretionary revisions:

P8 line 5: not further defined

P13 First sentence under Reversability: It is not all clear to which systematic literature review the authors here refer, presumably their own, or how it what done. In the commentaries it is stated that requested info on literature search now is provided. But is that really correct?

It is also unlikely that it did not produce any results at all. Wording?

P15 line 24 low through plasma levels: is that correct wording?

P17 second paragaph, line 6. It is correctly pointed out that brief intervention (BI) is an evidence-based practice against alcohol sequele in low early alcohol problematic (or risk) cases, besides treatment for AUD also having a solid evidence base. But does this also mean that BI would be effective in counterbatting TB? From the reading of the rest of the paper TB mainly appears to be associated with severe AUD, And thus is not really clear whether BI would be appropriate. I suggest this issue warrants a discussion. Actually it is even a bit more complicated than that. NNT is usually about 1 to 8-10 for alcohol treatment. Is it not likely that many of these severe patient cases would rank among those with even worse outcomes, so the treatment effectiveness for these cases would be lower? This observation of course does not mean that alcohol treatment should not be offered, but it seems to me that without improving the social conditions of these patients, treatment may well fail to be effective, and that this should be discussed in the paper, as this is an important issues for prioritization of treatment

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 I have no competing interests