Reviewer's report

Title: Delayed consultation among pulmonary tuberculosis patients: a cross sectional study of 10 DOTS districts of Ethiopia.

Version: 2 Date: 18 September 2008

Reviewer: Bernt Lindtjorn

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The major weakness of this paper is that it is based on patients reporting to health institutions. The authors argue that patients coming to these institutions are representative of tuberculosis patients in the Tigrai region. Many studies have shown that health institution data are biased (selection bias).

In this paper the selection bias probably explains the urban to rural distribution, the high HIV prevalence among their patients and walking distance.

I believe it is a good rule in epidemiological research to discuss the possible role of selection bias before generalizing their conclusions. Such a discussion would probably lead to adjustments in some of their conclusions.

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 interest