Author's response to reviews

Title: Different screening strategies (single or dual) for the diagnosis of suspected latent tuberculosis: a cost-effectiveness analysis

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To the Editor of BMC Pulmonary Disease

Thank you for the opportunity to make a revision to the manuscript 1685559911229299 entitled: “Different screening strategies (single or dual) for the diagnosis of suspected latent tuberculosis: a cost-effectiveness analysis”

We have attempted to address all the concerns made by the reviewer by preparing a point-by-point response to each comment.

Reviewer comment (in bold) is followed by our response (in plain text). Each comment and response is numbered in the same order as given in the reviewer’s report. The order of the responses is as follows:

Reviewer 1 – Kevin Schwartzman

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Table 4, 5a and 5b still do not account for the cost of the "no screening" strategy. In table 4, the "cases prevented" row compares each intervention with no screening; I believe the cost element should do the same. As mentioned earlier, this will actually improve the cost-effectiveness of the various interventions.

1. As suggested by the reviewer, we have now calculated both the incremental costs and incremental cost per active TB case prevented (compared to a ‘no screening’ scenario) for each strategy, which is now included in table 4. However, when we use this cost effectiveness measure in our analysis, we obtain results that differ from our previous analysis which had used total cost per case of active TB prevented. As such, we have rewritten the abstract, results and discussion sections of the manuscript to reflect these changes. Additionally, table 5a and 5b has also changed as the incremental cost per active TB case prevented for each strategy is now compared in the sensitivity analysis. We have also rewritten the cost effectiveness section on pg 10-11 of the data supplement.
2. ‘Additionally, no screening incurs downstream costs due to treatment of active TB cases; this amounts to £57,148 per 1000 contacts screened over the 2 year period of the model.’ [pp. 9-10] Suggest you drop the word "screened" after "contacts" in this sentence.

2. The word ‘screened’ has now been deleted from this sentence.