Author's response to reviews

Title: Performance evaluation of three commercial molecular assays for the detection of Mycobacterium tuberculosis from clinical specimens in a high TB-HIV-burden setting

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Version: 4 Date: 22 September 2015

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor

Re: Performance evaluation of three commercial molecular assays for the detection of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* from clinical specimens in a high TB-HIV-burden setting

Thank you for considering our work for publication in the *BMC Infectious Diseases* journal. We provide below a point by point response to your concerns. In addition we submit a revised version of the manuscript.

We look forward to further feedback.

Kind regards
Dr F Ismail

**Editor’s concerns**

1. Please clarify whether informed consent for the use of clinical specimens was required.

   - Written informed consent was not required as this was a laboratory based study using remnant sediments from respiratory samples that were submitted for routine TB processing. The study was approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria (Ethics reference number 445/2013). We have incorporated this in the methods section **Line 134-135**

2. Please remove the title and author details from immediately before the introduction. These are only needed on the title page.

   - This has been rectified.

3. As a minor point please ensure the abstract is within the 350 word limit (and ensure any changes are reflected in the abstract in the online submission system).

   The abstract contains 348 words excluding the keywords. Changes made are reflected in the new abstract submitted.
4. List of abbreviations: If abbreviations are used in the text they should be defined in the text at first use, and a list of abbreviations can be provided, which should precede the competing interests and authors' contributions.

Line 296-316: The list of abbreviations has been included in the manuscript.