Reviewer's report

Title: Monocyte unresponsiveness and impaired IL1beta, TNFalpha and IL7 production are associated with a poor outcome in Malawian adults with pulmonary tuberculosis

Version: 4 Date: 21 May 2015

Reviewer: Desta Kassa

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1. Reviewer's report

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- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. In line to your hypothesis that "monocyte unresponsiveness could contribute to Early death during TB treatment", please explain the rationale for selecting the 17 cytokines to be included in the analysis. i.e. how specific are these cytokines to serve as markers for monocyte function during TB disease?

2. Please explain whether the intracellular cytokine are matched with the other clinical groups (patients) which are categorized as "poor outcome’ and ‘good outcome”

If they are not matched how would it be possible to compare the level of cytokines produced in the “poor outcome’ and ‘good outcome” patients groups with that of immunophenotyping and intracellular cytokine profile observed in the 30 patients

- Minor Essential Revisions

1. In the Abstract page, methods section, line 12 “… immediately prior to commencing treatment ….” Please include “… and on day 56 of TB treatment”.

2. In the discussion part, line 8, “….we were did not see changes..”, please delete “were”30 patients enrolled for the analysis of monocyte immunophenotyping and

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'