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

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Reviewer: Harriet Mayanja

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1. The study population was described in a previous paper by the same team. However, it would be better if this methodology was summarized briefly in this manuscript. For example, what was the age, HIV status of the study population etc. this can be summarized in the methods section of patient populations. It's unclear how many patients with poor outcome improved and were included in the figure 2 analysis.

2. The results are clear and well presented in the related figures. The major findings were low levels of IL1b, TNFalpha and IL7 in response to H37Rv and LPS in patients with poorer outcomes, some restoration with patient improvement and correlation with P3CSK TLR ligand.

3. In the discussion however, a lot of emphasis is put on discussing TLRs(2, 4, 9) that did not show any significance in the present study. Authors should give a better background on the role of TLR and monocyte responses - again to make the manuscript more "free standing".

4. The authors seem to allude to the role of sepsis, or bacterial infection in the mechanisms of the immune responses seen. However they is no indication to show or suggest that bacterial infection contributed to the poor outcome, so as to strengthen the association of sepsis, poor Tb outcome and the immune responses described.