Reviewer’s report

Title: Predicting the risk of pulmonary tuberculosis based on the neutrophil-to-lymphocyte ratio at TB screening in HIV-infected individuals

Version: 0 Date: 07 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Soojung Um

Reviewer's report:

I think the idea of this study is wonderful. But I found that there are several questions to be explained.

1) I think that the definition of "Development of active TB" is not quite clear in this study. The author presented that if patients were registered at TB registry during study period, they accepted them as new TB cases.

However TB diagnosis is often complicated. I recommend the authors to clarify the definition of the "active TB" cases. For example, if they were culture positive or TB symptom and TB PCR positive or radiologically diagnosed.

As the author described in the discussion session, inadequate screening and misdiagnosis might be present and I feel this portion should be clarified.

2) When I see the result I wonder what the TB symptom means. This study was to prove predictive value of NLR for development of active tb among initially TB negative patients.

However, TB symptom means active TB or other respiratory disease. It means that most of newly developed TB patients of this study might be missed diagnosis of TB at initial screening stage of this study.

3) I dont think the author's conclusion that the NLR coule predict TB development is suitable because Tb symptom was most powerful variable for prediction of TB, and even the TB diagnosis was not adequate.

4) Because NLR is one of universal inflammmatory marker, more specific variable than TB symptoms to combine with NLR is needed to predict TB development. As I mentioned earlier, I dont think TB symptom is predictable marker.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?  
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?  
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?  
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I recommend additional statistical review

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