Reviewer's report

Title: TB treatment delays and associated factors within the Zimbabwe National Tuberculosis programme

Version: 1 Date: 15 April 2014

Reviewer: Sven Gudmund Hinderaker

Reviewer's report:

This is a nice paper about treatment delay in Zimbabwe, interviewing patients about their symptoms and diagnosis. Delays at health facilities were short, but patient delay before contacting the health system averaged a month. Text is good, with some minor issues for your consideration.

Major revision: None

Minor essential revisions:
There are more tables than needed for the paper. I suggest you reduce number of tables, combine 2+3 and 3+4. Some columns can be deleted: p-values and NO-columns.

The column heading remaining are:
Tables 2+3: Characteristics-Total- Patient delay>30d - OR(95%CI) - AOR(95%CI)
Tables 4+5: Characteristics- Total- Health system delay>15d - OR(95%CI) - AOR(95%CI)

Discretionary revisions and pages:
p 7+10 “DOT facility”: abbr is not given in text, this is TB language not known elsewhere.
p8 Use real colon (;) instead of semicolon (;).
p9 Words: “Ethical Advisory Group” is “Ethics AG”
p11 Language: Repetition of “In this…”, Discussion, first para
p11 “Traditional medicine … uncommon”, says who? Often patients will NOT TELL, I suggest state this will less confidence
p12 Statements of “negative findings” are stronger if accompanied with power calculation, easy by e.g OpenEpi.
p16 Check format of references, and check #1 and #5

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests