Reviewer’s report

Title: Traditional healers’ role in the detection of active TB cases in a pastoralist community in Ethiopia: a pilot interventional study

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Reviewer: Francis Apolinary Mhimbira

Reviewer's report:

Traditional healers' role in the detection of active TB cases in a pastoralist community in Ethiopia: a pilot interventional study

Diagnosis delay has detrimental effects to the patients by increasing severity of the TB disease, but also may contribute to TB transmission in the community. Evidence shows, traditional healers could be the first point of care for presumptive TB patients. Hence, intervening in this group is an interesting approach to learn and hopeful scale up in other areas with similar health seeking behavior approach. This is an interesting paper to read, and brings useful evidence to increase TB case finding in high TB setting. I have few comments that will need authors attention.

General

* Try to shorten the introduction and methods section
* The results are very interesting, but they lack the flow to capture the readers' attention
* There are several typos and we need to improve the grammar. See lines 319
* Results section needs to be enriched with other types of findings.
* The discussion section has to be written to reflect the findings of this study.

Introduction

* Line 73: Put italics in species names like … Mycobacterium tuberculosis…
* Introduction: introduce on diagnostic delay in relation to the presumptive TB patients using the THs
Methods

* There are no results of the original 22 THs. Is there a specific reason of why the authors are not presenting their results? This may help us to get a sense of why they ended up being loss to follow-up.

* Line: 179-180: can be joined to the other paragraph, it doesn't read well standing alone.

* Line 185-187: not clear what measurements/data did you take?

* Line 209-211: keep the same format of the text with correct spacing.

Results

* Line 263-266: I fail to understand the patient flow in your study. Please consider using a figure to show the participants flow.

* How did the author ascertain the TB status form this study? Please try to be detailed in your study procedures. Consider additional text in the methods section.

* Table 1 & 2: the line numbers do appear in the table, please format this correctly. The data presentation in this table is also very confusing, try to improve the presentation of the data. Consider indenting the sub-options of each category. It may look nice and easy to understand for the reader.

* Line 263 and Line 288: the total number of referred TB suspects is contracting. How may presumptive TB patients were referred in this study, either 20 or 24?

* The number referred seem to be so low for one year.

* Line 263-264: TB prevalence 13/24*100=54.1%, this is one of the highest TB detection rate I have ever seen. Does this actually correlate with the background prevalence of TB? Are there any other studies in such setting with such a yield?

* Line 290:…” median age 31.5 (SD=17.34)".. If your summary statistic is median, then present interquartile range (IQR). Standard deviation is for mean and not median.

* The TH were followed up after two years, why did the authors only ask the details of the presumptive TB patients for just one year?

* The results section doesn't present any results on diagnostic delay? If these results are available, do we have any controls to assess the effect of THs in reducing diagnostic delay?
Discussion

* The results presented have no way shown they have improved TB care and preventions.

* Line 305-307: based on the findings, it is difficult to suggest that the THs can facilitate early case detection. We have no comparison sites to make this suggestion, and no time to diagnosis has been presented in this study

* Comment on the design and how that affected the loss-to follow-up

* Line 321 and 325: these results are not presented in the results section. I think they have to appear somewhere in the results. Please author consider this.

Conclusion

* Not sure what was the criteria chosen to assess knowledge retention among THS

**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.

No

**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?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited
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