Reviewer’s report

Title: A Four-Year Trend in Pulmonary Bacteriologically Confirmed Tuberculosis Case Detection in Kampala-Uganda

Version: 0 Date: 15 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Maxwell Oluwole Akanbi

Reviewer's report:

The authors carried out a retrospective cohort study to describe trends in bacteriologically confirmed pulmonary tuberculosis among patients treated for tuberculosis between January 2012 and December 2015 in Kampala, Uganda. The results show an increase in bacteriologically diagnosed pulmonary tuberculosis in 2014 and 2015, compared to 2012 and 2013. This increase coincides with the increased utilization of Gene Xpert for the diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis and may not necessarily due to an increase in the number of patients with pulmonary tuberculosis.

A pertinent finding from this study is the high burden of smear positive pulmonary tuberculosis in the study population. This highlights the need to employ comprehensive measures to address the tuberculosis epidemic in Uganda, and other countries with high burden of tuberculosis.

Major Comments
1. Scope of the study: The study title and study aim was to describe the trend of bacteriologically confirmed tuberculosis over the study period. The results presented however went beyond this scope and included outcomes of tuberculosis treatment.
2. Additional information is needed in the methods section stating the statistical methods used to achieve the main study objective(s).
3. New information and data were presented in the result section, which were not described/defined in the methods section. All treatment outcomes need to be defined.
4. Lines 150-152: Results of linkage to HIV care are presented. It will be helpful if information on how 'linkage to care' was defined and assessed in your study is presented.
5. Could the authors provide information in the methods sections on the guidelines for tuberculosis diagnosis during the period covered by the study?

Minor Comments
1. Line 69- An abbreviation 'PBC TB' is presented without prior definition. All abbreviations should be written in full at first mention to aid the readers understanding of the manuscript.
2. There appears to be some inconsistency in the abbreviation of 'PBC TB'. Sometimes it was written as 'PBC-TB' and other times written in full(Line 78).
3. The abbreviation 'CPT' appears several times in the manuscript without first being written in full.
4. Line 119: Based on the distribution of the study population, only the median or mean needs to
be presented and not necessarily both.

5. Line 189-191: Smear positive pulmonary tuberculosis is used as an indicator of late presentation of tuberculosis. It will be helpful if a reference is provided to support this.

6. Tables: All abbreviations in all tables need to be written in full at the bottom of the table. All titles need to be self-explanatory.

7. Table 1: HIV status-404?

8. References: References need to be formatted to comply with the instructions of the journal

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?
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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?
3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal