Reviewer’s report

Title: The association between the ratio of monocytes:lymphocytes at age 3 months and risk of tuberculosis (TB) in the first two years of life.

Version: 1 Date: 25 February 2014

Reviewer: Harriet Mayanja

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript is overall well written with a relevant message where the authors show that baseline Monocyte Lymphocyte ratio is predictive of progression to active TB in children. The paper follows onto other work in animals and adults published by other authors. There is adequate reference to the primary study which is already published.

Major revisions

1. Background - authors need to check references 1 and 2 - they do not seem to be related to the text - lines 74 to 77
2. Reference is made to Fletcher paper on 2 to 3 occasions; this unpublished paper was sent as an addition to the submitted paper. However the readers will not have access to this paper, unless it is published before current manuscript.
3. The subheading "176 Baseline ML ratio is associated with TB disease free survival" does not seem to tally well with the following text, such as the lines "Specifically, the ML ratio was 199 significantly associated with TB disease alone or in combination with all-cause 200 death and latent TB infection."

Since this section of results most strongly reflects the title and abstract, the text part of the results needs more clarification and explanation of the statistics in text form.

5. Figure 1A labelling could be in sync with the text use of HEU which in the table are labelled as HIV negative.

6. Cut off for TST should be included in text rather than being assumed

Minor

Spacing before a bracket needs to be reviewed in a number of areas.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests