Reviewer’s report

Title: The prevalence of tuberculosis among prisoners in Ethiopia: A systematic review and meta-analysis of published studies

Version: 0 Date: 16 Apr 2017

Reviewer: al Darraj Haider

Reviewer's report:

Authors are discussing a subject of interest to those working on the health of prisoners.

General:

- Authors need to conform to guidelines of scientific writing and mind the many syntax errors.
- Authors need to be consistent when referring to people in prisons (detainees, prisoners, inmates)

Abstract:

- Spell words before providing acronyms (e.g. 95% CI)
- At the conclusion: "No evidence was found on the status of latent TB, treatment outcome.....". Not sure about the context of this paragraph as it is not part of your study aim or search strategy!
- Keywords: you may want to add "meta-analysis" or "review"

Background:

- You need to dedicate a paragraph discussing the current policies in the Ethiopian prisons in terms of screening and managing TB, and especially in relation to WHO approved preventive and control policies, e.g. "Three Is"
- "Globally, the prevalence of tuberculosis (TB) among prisoners...", provide the reference for this!
- The second paragraph "Although prisons have healthcare centers that provide...", I am confused here, are these healthcare centres related to the prison or to the Ministry of Health in the community? As I mentioned above, we need to know about the infection control measures in the prison rather than the community (?) centres.
- Same paragraph: Which is meant by the word "reservoir"? prisons or the healthcare centres?

- "global end TB strategy": end should start with capital E. "creating opportunity", either "the opportunity" or "opportunities"

- "... for potential infectiousness": not sure this is the aim of systematic screening, but rather to early diagnose and minimise transmission, disability, and death.

Methods:

- The dates of searching data should be mentioned

- Although usually not peer-reviewed, grey publications are relevant here and should have been explored or at least referred to in the text.

- Not sure why English language publications only were included, despite authors being from Ethiopia. I would include any publication relevant to the subject of the study to have a better picture.

- Authors need to provide a checklist of the quality assessment of each paper, particularly of biases (recruitment, outcome measurement...)

- You need to set your definition of TB disease, either using WHO guidelines or a simplified one.

- Provide reference for the statistically significant heterogeneity cutoff used in the study

Discussion:

- Page 7: "This pooled prevalence is comparable with reports from South Africa....", South Africa prisons or community clinics...?

- Page 8: "On the other hand, our result was less than ....", use more scientific way of expressing this.

- Page 8: "where Ethiopia is found", replace with "located"

- Page 9: When assessing the TB prevalence in overcrowded cells, you will need to include calculations about the surface area of each cell in relation to the number of prisoners.

- Authors need to properly discuss the high level of heterogeneity, its potential causes and its effect on drawing the conclusion from these findings.
Conclusion:

- Again, is it relevant to mention information about latent TB here?

- "trainings on infection prevention for prisoners and prison staff", not sure what this means? Try to re-phrase to make it clearer.

References:

- Check references for mistakes. Example: Reference 27 (the first author is Kamarulzaman A)

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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