Author's response to reviews

**Title:** Comparative efficiency research: Meta-analysis of cost-effectiveness studies

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**Author's response to reviews:** see over
Dear Editor,

We would like to thank the Editor for the constructive suggestions.

All the comments made by the Editor have been addressed, with the corresponding changes made directly to the manuscript where appropriate and detailed responses included below.

All authors listed on the title page have read the new version of the manuscript, and have agreed to the changes and the responses.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience

Yours sincerely,

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EDITOR:

1. The results section of the abstract is still hard to follow as it isn’t easy to understand in relation to the abstract methods section which makes it difficult for readers looking at the abstract on its own. For example, the Frank copula, TINB<0 test and various p-values are mentioned in the results but not in the methods. Please revise so that the methods and results relate to each other and can be interpreted standalone.
   Author’s comments: We have changed the abstract to improve understanding.
   Line: 29-35

2. line 132 replace ‘of’ by ‘the’
   Author’s comments: We have corrected the mistake in this sentence (from ‘of’ to ‘the’)
   Line: 132

3. above line 149, need an extra bracket ) at the end of the denominator
   Author’s comments: We have included the bracket at the end of the denominator and we have corrected the formulae.
   Line: 149

4. line 209. Add to create a hypothetical population TO TEST THE VALIDITY of the COMER
   Author’s comments: We have added the words suggested.
   Line: 209

5. 3 individuals per study does not reflect real life meta-analysis situations so it would be worth commenting on this in the discussion somewhere
   Author’s comments: We now state in the Methods section:
   “To ensure that there was a minimum variability per study, the random assignation was conditioned to ensure that, for each study, there were at least 3 individuals.” lines 264-266.
   and in the Discussion section:
   “In addition, in the assignation of individuals per study we forced the assignation of three or more individuals to avoid studies with minimum or null variability. Although, in reality it is unusual to find studies with 3 cases, analysis of very-small samples allows a small number of individuals to be assigned, thus generating greater heterogeneity between studies, as occurs in reality.” lines 392-396.

6. line 313, 333, 350 add the scenario number so that the reader can easily follow
   Author’s comments: We have included the scenario number
   Line: 317, 337, 357

7. line 380 - replace ‘simple’ by ‘sample’
   Author’s comments: We have corrected the typo (from ‘simple’ to ‘sample’)
   Line: 387

8. line 383 - this sentence does not make sense to me
   Author’s comments: We have modified the sentence to aid understanding.
   Line: 389-392
9. line 394 - add the words 'SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO account'."

Author’s comments: We have added the words suggested.
Line: 409