Reviewer's report

Title: Total knee arthroplasty after high tibial osteotomy. A systematic review.

Version: 1 Date: 6 March 2009

Reviewer: Wilco Jacobs

Reviewer's report:

I congratulate the authors for tackling a very relevant topic in the range of treatment options for knee problems. I was asked for statistical opinion regarding the systematic review methodology, leading to a few critical notes.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The rationale behind the choice for a cut-off of 50% should be given. In the reference of van tulder (ref 12), there are 5 options and van Tulder states that the reason behind the choice should be clearly described.

2. The reference of van Raaij should have been assessed by another reviewer as this is the author’s own study.

3. The major problem with assessing the statistical quality of the paper is the lack of information about the group consisting of patients with TKP without prior HTO and sample sizes. In table 6 the number of knees with HTO and with no HTO are exactly equal for all levels, by design possible because caused by the matched pair design of the studies. However, in my experience in literature reviews, the lost-to-followup and missing data aspect is always present. In all other tables and in the text, the sample size is not mentioned. I therefore ask the authors to add sample sizes to the other tables and conform the numbers in table 6.

4. The authors choose not to perform quantitative analysis, as stated in the discussion, second paragraph. Information about age and gender, specifically for the non HTO group is not given, so this statement is not supported by data. Please add this information.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests