Reviewer’s report

Title: Surgery is more cost-effective than splinting for carpal tunnel syndrome. Results of an economic evaluation alongside a randomized controlled trial.

Version: Date: 17 August 2006
Reviewer: Robert A Werner

Reviewer’s report:

General
The changes to the text regarding the limitations of the study are an improvement.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
Although the text of the manuscript and the abstract have been modified to reflect the results are limited to the Netherlands, the title should also be modified to reflect this as well:

Surgery is more cost-effective than splinting for carpal tunnel syndrome in the Netherlands. Results of an economic evaluation alongside a randomized controlled trial.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
The authors explicitly report the effect of outliers on the lost work time which make the the 2 groups appear equivalent. When the outliers are excluded, the lost work time is dramatically different. This would significantly influence the outcome of the findings. I am suggesting an additional secondary analysis with the outliers excluded to determine the impact of the outlier data. This would not be a replacement of the primary analysis. At the very, least some statement in the discussion of the impact of the outliers on the analysis should be included.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests