Reviewer's report

Title: Cost-effectiveness of primary offer of IVF vs. primary offer of IUI followed by IVF (for IUI failures) in couples eligible for both treatment strategies

Version: 1 Date: 3 March 2006

Reviewer: Marinus J Eijkemans

Reviewer's report:

General

1. The manuscript addresses an important issue in Fertility Medicine. The modelling approach is interesting, but given that there are RCT's on the subject that reach opposite conclusions, the modelling exercise should be better founded and, particularly, the results of the promised sensitivity analysis should be shown and should be extensive, to convince readers.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

2. Show results of extensive sensitivity analysis.
   Some of the parameters that are under debate:
   - effectiveness of IUI: how can C_IUI have lower effectiveness than U_IUI?
   - effectiveness of FET: your estimate seems rather high to me.
   - Can you mimic the Goverde analysis, with their assumptions about effectiveness per cycle, and show how results would be in your model?
   In fact: everything you mention in the Discussion about the literature should be quantified in the sensitivity analysis and results shown.

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

3. The abstract needs to be made more specific:
   - mention the effectiveness parameter (LB)
   - (Results) Cost-effectiveness ratios for IVF (?) Compared to what?

4. Introduction:
   last sentence of first paragraph: How do you avoid transition to IVF if you do IVF in all couples? Doesn't make sense to me.

5. The 'subtitles' in the Results section seem a bit odd to me.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

6. It's 'The Netherlands', not 'Netherlands'

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

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