Reviewer's report

**Title:** Severe male infertility after failed ICSI treatment- a phenomenological study of men's experiences

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 29 December 2010

**Reviewer:** Herman Tournaye

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The paper by Johansson et al. addresses an important issue in reproductive andrology, i.e. psychological aspects of coping with infertility in men. In their paper the authors present a small case series of men suffering from obstructive azoospermia.

**minor revisions:**

The interview part of the results is anecdotal but the description may still be more structured. Did the authors use a tool to code and/or structure the interviews (e.g. Nvivo9 software)

**discretionary revisions:**

The conclusions may be hampered because finally only 8 men accepted interview and because men with a similar pathology treated succesfully were excluded from analysis although their coping may be similar. Can this be a limitation towards counselling of couples suffering from obstructive azoospermia? The authors should comment

The 'uphill' mechanism has also been described in the early nineties in IVF patients by Demyttenaere et al was and named 'Sisyphus syndrome in IVF'or Sisyphus-women. Given the similarity of what is reported in this paper, I miss these references in the discussion part as I miss the comparison with what is known in general on coping in both the male and the female.

It was not mentioned what the origin of obstructive azoospermia was. I can imagine that the coping might be different in men with an acquired cause, eg. infection by a sexually transmittable disease, versus a genetic cause, i.e. CFTR mutations.

Unfortunately this information is lacking.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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