Reviewer's report

Title: Who is the gate keeper for treatment in a fertility clinic in Germany? - Baseline-results of a prospective cohort study (PinK-Study)-

Version: 0 Date: 10 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Tewes Wischmann

Reviewer's report:

In this study, the role of the referring medical doctor in ART treatment in German region is investigated. The design of the study is adequate, the sample size of women and men before ART is sufficient, the results are clearly interpreted and the paper's writing is good (but the paper should be evaluated by a native English speaker: „the physician point of view", „a current prevalence", the included waiting periods" sound odd). The findings are important for the readers of BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth but I have several suggestions to improve the quality of the paper.

Page 4, lines 5-6: I suggest „For the remaining group of men, urologists …"

Page 6, line 1: Reference [9] does not fit here.

Page 6, lines 2 and 7: the newest statistics for 2015 (Germany) and 2012 (for Europe) should be used (see references)

Page 6, line 10: The guideline [16] is not binding, so this word should be omitted.

Page 6, line 12: Patients can be referred by independent physicians to fertility centres (suggested wording: …"after referral by an independent physician.

Page 7, line 1: correct: „…are reported to be lower than 20% per treatment cycle …"

Page 7, line 22: correct: „… on patients at five fertility clinics …" (not „all" because there are six centres in Rhineland-Palatinate).

Page 10, line 9: I guess that 5.8% is the correct rate of men who named their partner's gynaecologist as the first contact person (see table1, line 35).

Page 11, line 7: My suggestion: „More than half of all women …"

Page 12, line 10: My suggestion: „… in fertility clinics in a German region …"

Page 13; lines 10-11: My suggestion: „…that only patients of selected fertility clinics were surveyed."
Page 13; line 11: My suggestion: „They only represent a part of the group …”

Page 13; line 15: My suggestion is to add ref. 25 (to 10 and 11).

Page 13; lines 1-3: My suggestion „…due to the often mandatory financial commitment or that they are not adequately informed about these treatment options.”

Page 15; line 20: My suggestion „A part of the patient collective …”


Page 16; lines 4-6: My suggestion „… men and women have heard about treatment measures (e.g. IVF, insemination and sperm or egg donation) than of psychosocial counselling …”

Page 17; line 7: „Fertilisation”

Page 17; line 23: „… Gutenberg University Mainz.”

Page 19; line 23: „11. Helfferich C …”

Page 19; line 23: „11. Helfferich C …”

Page 20; line 4: replace with „DIR Jahrbuch 2015” (see below).

Page 20; line 8: replace with „Calhaz-Jorge et al. 2016” (see below).

Page 20; line 13: one colon too much.

Page 21; line 14: „21. Wischmann T …”

Page 21: Reference #22 should be omitted because this is a study on women using PGD which is a very special ART treatment measure. I suggest to replace this reference by Boivin & Lancastle 2010 (see below).

Page 22; line 11: „32. Himmel W et al. …”

References:


Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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