

Table 2. Examples of claims statements recorded from fertility centre websites accessed December 2015 to March 2016

Intervention	Website claim	Project ID for the fertility centre (see Web Table 1)	Website and link
Ovarian reserve test/AMH and antral follicle count	"A pre-treatment scan gives the clinician the information they need to decide on the most appropriate treatment pathway for you. This allows the team to optimise your chances of achieving a pregnancy."	ID 57	http://www.nurturefertility.co.uk/
Clotting (thrombophilia) screen	"this is a test that determines whether you are at an increased risk of developing blood clots that could be a potential cause of miscarriage and implantation failure (where the embryo doesn't attach to the womb and develop). If this test is positive, the problem can be easily treated by taking aspirin and/or an anticoagulant (medication that thins the blood) throughout your treatment cycle and early pregnancy"	ID 2	http://www.agoraclinic.co.uk/
Immune testing	"Immune testing – there has been a lot of research to try to discover possible immunological reasons why an embryo fails to attach to the womb and develop, causing repeated miscarriages. It has been suggested that this can be caused by higher than normal levels of 'natural killer' cells (a type of white blood cell that is part of a healthy immune system) and auto-antibodies (antibodies that attack specific organs) and positive results have been reported from women treated for these. The treatment for a positive test result involves taking various medications that gently suppress the natural killer cell activity in the immune system." (ID2)	ID 2	http://www.agoraclinic.co.uk/
Intrauterine insemination (IUI)	"In general intrauterine insemination is a good assisted conception treatment if it is performed to overcome a problem of lack of sperm ie using donor sperm for severe male subfertility, and for single women or lesbian couples. It is also successful if intercourse is not occurring normally such as in cases of ejaculation dysfunction (ED). Intrauterine insemination is moderately successful when used for cervical mucus hostility when sperm are killed within the cervix. Intrauterine insemination tends to be less useful if the indication is male factor subfertility ie low numbers or movement of sperm or in unexplained infertility."	ID 4	http://www.carefertility.com/
Intracytoplasmic morphologically selected sperm injection (IMSI)	"Research has shown that IMSI may have a positive impact in the following cases: Men who have elevated levels of DNA fragmentation When there have been recurrent miscarriages Where implantation hasn't worked on several occasions following ICSI treatment Where previous embryos have developed poorly When there's a high number of abnormal sperm."	ID 15	http://www.bourn-hall-clinic.co.uk/
Frozen Embryo Transfer	"...we have a good success rate for frozen embryo transfer procedures, because a great	ID 29	https://www.manchesterfertility.com/

(FET); also known as Frozen Embryo Replacement (FER)	deal of our research effort goes into ways of identifying the very best embryos."		
Blastocyst culture	"Leaving the embryos to develop onto Day Five enables the embryologists to select the most advanced embryos for transfer, thereby increasing the chance of transferring the embryos most likely to implant."	ID 7	http://www.argc.co.uk/
Chromosome screening / preimplantation genetic screening PGS	"Chromosomal abnormalities are often the explanation for unsuccessful pregnancies, so selecting the correct embryos can improve the chances of a successful implantation and birth."	ID 32	http://www.conceptfertility.co.uk
Cytokine testing (Th1, Th2)	"Th1 and Th2 cells are immune cells whose balance is vital for maintaining pregnancy. If you are producing too many Th1-type immune cells this may also reduce the chances of successful implantation and we may again recommend immunosuppression treatment."	ID 3	http://www.ivf.org.uk/
Autoimmunity to the human chorionic gonatrophin (hCG) receptor	"hCG is a hormone produced in the early pregnancy and there is evidence that it causes natural suppression of the immune system in order to assist in the implantation of the embryo in the womb. A receptor is a part of a cell that attaches to the hormone to have an effect. A theory exists that the presence of maternal antibodies against hCG or its receptor may affect implantation, leading to failure to achieve a pregnancy or to miscarriage."	ID 3	http://www.ivf.org.uk/
Thyroid antibodies	"A hormonal imbalance is quite often the cause of infertility in both men and women. It is probably the leading cause of infertility in women. The pituitary gland, the hypothalamus and to some extent the thyroid gland affect hormonal control of the reproductive organs and any defect in any of these may result in fertility problems. The following conditions can affect the hormonal control, PCOS (polycystic ovary syndrome), hypothyroidism, luteal phase defect. Often once the irregularity is corrected and the hormones regulated, it is likely that couples will be able to conceive."	ID 16	http://www.jessopfertility.org.uk/
Surgical sperm retrieval MESA TESA PESE Micro TESE	"In men with obstructive azoospermia there is a very high chance of recovering sperm by this method (>90%). In men with non-obstructive azoospermia the chances of recovering sperm is approximately 40%. If we are successful at retrieving sperm the pregnancy rate for this treatment is very similar to that of ICSI with ejaculated sperm."	ID 27	http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/ivf
Embryoscope	"Embryoscope – recording information by time-lapse photography allows us to assess more subtle changes seen during embryo development and identify the best embryos for transfer. A new time-lapse technology called the Embryoscope™ involves culturing embryos in an incubator equipped with a special microscope, camera and computer. Available since 2011 it has already led to the birth of thousands of healthy babies. Each individual embryo is imaged separately and monitored every 15 minutes allowing subtle changes in development to be detected. This allows selection of embryos with the	ID 14	http://www.bostonplaceclinic.co.uk/

	highest pregnancy potential - so-called morphokinetics."		
hysterosalpingogram (womb x ray)	"The chance of a pregnancy after either a hysterosalpingogram or laparoscopy may be slightly higher in the 2 or 3 cycles after the fertility test."	ID 3	http://www.ivf.org.uk/
assisted hatching	"Microsurgical assisted hatching involves making a small tear in the zona pellucida (shell) around the embryo with a laser. This creates a weak spot which makes it easier for the embryo inside to 'hatch' and implant in your womb. If the embryo cannot escape from the zona it will never be able to implant no matter how good it is. The procedure can either be done on day three or day five of your treatment."	ID 24	http://www.cambridge-ivf.org.uk/
Egg Freezing with the EVES technique	"CARE Fertility has been freezing embryos using the vitrification technique (EVES) for a number years. This has been associated with a remarkable increase in pregnancy rates. "	ID 4	http://www.carefertility.com/
Reproductive Immunology	"Special tests may identify couples who are at risk of these problems. Treatment which stimulates the proper immune response (immuno-modulation) in the mother may then improve the chances of a successful pregnancy."	ID 4	http://www.carefertility.com/
EmbryoGlue [®]	"EmbryoGlue [®] is a culture medium that is used to transfer your embryos back to the uterus. It is unique as it contains a high concentration of hyaluronan, a substance which is naturally occurring in the uterus & known to be involved in implantation. Through our own research at our partnership clinic Nurture, we have shown that a small sub-group of patients may benefit from using EmbryoGlue [®] . They saw a dramatic rise in pregnancy rates in women over the age of 34 who had previously had multiple unsuccessful IVF cycles. Our 2012 results show a clinical pregnancy rate of 55% in day 5 transfers in this group; this is an increase of 19% compared to the previous year."	ID 22	http://burtonfertility.co.uk/
Time Lapse Embryo Imaging (see primo vision)/embryoscope	"Studies so far suggest that embryos selected with the help of time-lapse imaging have a high chance of forming a healthy pregnancy, so the technology will be especially welcome for patients with a poor reproductive record - that is, women who have already been unsuccessful in IVF and/or those of an older reproductive age."	ID 38	http://www.londonwomensclinic.com/
Oxidative stress levels in semen (ROS test)	"Increased levels of ROS may be reduced with a change in lifestyle and a diet rich in anti-oxidants, designed to protect against oxidative stress. Randomised placebo controlled studies have shown that anti-oxidant supplements can reduce ROS levels and sperm DNA damage, and improve pregnancy rates. Treatment of infections can also reduce ROS levels. A large randomised study compared men with Chlamydia or Ureaplasma infection with and without antibiotics for 3 months. Those treated showed a significant fall in ROS levels, improved sperm motility and a significant increase in pregnancy rates"	ID 57	http://www.andrologysolutions.co.uk/
Early Embryo Viability Assessment (Eeva [™]), a subtype of time lapse embryo imaging	"EEVA is designed to safely identify which embryos are most likely to develop to blastocyst stage – a critical stage in embryo development that typically happens on 'day' 5 or 6. With access to this unique information, your IVF team can more accurately select the best embryo(s) for transfer, and this could improve your chances for a successful	ID 40	http://www.gcrm.co.uk/

	pregnancy."		
Ovulation Induction & Cycle Monitoring	"Ovulation induction is recommended for women who haven't yet reached menopause but aren't ovulating. Depending on your age, this treatment is 10-20% successful. For women whose only fertility issue is anovulation, up to 80% of patients ovulate once induced and 50% of those conceive. We begin by using ultrasound to see whether there is a follicle maturing.... We would then use the information from your ultrasound to recommend either natural ovulation, tablets or a series of injections to encourage your body to produce a mature egg. This treatment is often successful and is used as the first option when treating infertility due to polycystic ovarian syndrome or other conditions which inhibit ovulation."	ID 32	http://www.conceptfertility.co.uk
vitrification of human eggs and embryos	"Research indicates may improve pregnancy rates by increasing the survival rates of the eggs after thawing from 65% to 95%."	ID 46	http://southtees.nhs.uk/services/reproductive-medicine/
PICSI	"A recently completed trial of PICSI has delivered a pregnancy rate of 66 % of those patients participating."	ID 58	http://www.originfertilitycare.com/
Metabolomics	"The metabolomics procedure is a simple one, and can be done within a few minutes, and the embryo itself isn't tested, but the materials around it. It effectively provides a metabolomics profile for embryos to determine their quality, what does that mean? This profile is a measure of the performance of the embryo in a sense, and is composed of the end results of all the pathways and reactions that keep an embryo alive and developing. The better the metabolomics profile of the embryo, the better it is functioning and so the better its chances of leading to a full term pregnancy."	ID 9	http://www.healthcentre.org.uk/fertility-treatment/find-clinic-crosshouse-hospital.html
Egg/ embryo Freezing outcomes	"It is important to be aware that not all embryos survive the freezing/thawing process but it is typically around 80% that do. Having a frozen embryo transferred in a subsequent cycle can be done either with or without medication. A recent study in Oxford has confirmed that success rates for both treatments are similar. Once an embryo has implanted, the chance of a successful outcome does not appear to be different from that of any other IVF pregnancy."	ID 59	http://www.oxfordfertilityunit.com/
Endometrial Scratching	"For an IVF/ICSI cycle to be successful, in addition to good quality embryos it is also important that the lining of the womb (endometrium) where the embryo is going to implant is favourable. Recent studies have suggested that a simple procedure called "endometrial scratch" can boost the chances of successful implantation."	ID 17	http://www.genesisivf.co.uk/
Ovulation induction (see above cell ovulation induction and cycle monitoring)	"Drug treatment of ovulation failure has a high success rate. Patients should, however, bear in mind that it may take several months to achieve a pregnancy and there is no guarantee of success."	ID 64	http://www.shropshireivf.nhs.uk/

endometrial Receptivity Array (ERA)	"A small amount of tissue from the womb lining (endometrium) can be sampled and analysed for the presence of over 200 genes known to be associated with implantation. Studies have shown that for some women this "window of implantation" is shifted either earlier or later in the menstrual cycle, or it is very narrow. Furthermore, by moving the planned embryo transfer to the appropriate time, chances of successful implantation are improved."	ID 40	http://www.gcrm.co.uk/
Ovarian tissue Freezing	"Several small strips from the outside of one of the ovaries are removed by laparoscopy (key-hole surgery). This tissue containing immature eggs is then frozen until a suitable time after which it may be transplanted back (grafted) on to the ovary. This is an experimental procedure with a few reported livebirths."	ID 14	http://www.bostonplaceclinic.co.uk/
SpermSlow™	"Hyaluronan may also help to isolate mature sperm for use in ICSI (intracytoplasmic sperm injection) cycles helping to increase fertilisation rates"	ID 45	http://www.ivfhammersmith.com/
Sperm freezing	"The sample will be frozen by our embryologists using vitrification technology, an advanced fast-freezing which allows for almost indefinite storage. Once frozen, the sperm can be thawed at your disposal, with very high survival rates from thawing."	ID 33	http://www.createhealth.org/
Artificial Oocyte Activation (AOA)	"In order for fertilisation to be successful, the sperm must release a specific functioning enzyme called Phospholipase C zeta (PLCζ) when it enters the egg. This induces waves of calcium oscillations across the egg to "activate it" allowing fertilisation to take place. A deficient or abnormal PLCζ may be the cause of failed or very low fertilisation. This can be overcome in some situations using a calcium ionophore solution to artificially activate the egg."	ID 15	http://www.bourn-hall-clinic.co.uk/
intralipid infusion	"Intralipid infusion therapy can help to stabilise your immune system and increase your chances of having a baby....It is safe, non-invasive and may help to increase your chance of success."	ID 50	http://www.lfc.org.uk/
Sperm DNA Test/ SpermComet	"The SpermComet test is a second-generation investigation that can measure the actual damage in individual sperm. It can help us to diagnose and treat couples previously faced with 'Unexplained Infertility'. 1 in 6 couples have trouble conceiving and as many as 25% of these continue to have trouble even when undergoing fertility treatment. In some clinics men are only offered a traditional semen analysis and, should this show normal results, then the couple will be diagnosed with 'Unexplained Infertility'. Recent tests have shown that up to 80% of men with unexplained infertility have problems in their sperm DNA. Problems that can only be detected using the sperm comet test. Things like stress, smoking, alcohol, recreational drugs, obesity and other avoidable lifestyle factors can affect sperm quality. Even healthy sperm have some DNA damage, but it's the amount of damage that matters. What are the reasons for having the test? As well as going a long way to diagnose Unexplained Infertility, Sperm DNA Damage has	ID 15	http://www.bourn-hall-clinic.co.uk/

	now also been linked to recurrent miscarriage. Having a detailed analysis of the sperm DNA damage means that we are better equipped to treat you and to provide advice which can make a dramatic difference."		
Dummy/mock embryo transfer	"The dummy embryo transfer is a trial run for the process of embryo transfer. This is necessary to establish whether the actual transfer is likely to encounter difficulties. It also allows us to take measurements and/or note any deviations of the uterus. When the time comes for the actual embryo transfer this information allows us to proceed with the least amount of trauma to the fragile embryos. Should we encounter resistance to the passage of the catheter we may recommend ways to dilate the cervix. The use of dilapan/cervical dilatation facilitates the embryo transfer procedure and this helps to improve the pregnancy rate."	ID 26	http://www.crgh.co.uk/
Modified natural cycle IVF (Gentle/Light IVF)	"IVF Lite: A low-dose, single embryo transfer, which avoids the risk of twins and counts on the delivery of a healthy single baby."	ID 38	http://www.londonwomensclinic.com/
Embryogen	"It is a culture medium which represents a new assistance for patients who have suffered miscarriages. The medium contains the growth factor cytokine (a signaling protein that essentially participates in the immunological response of the organism), which has a verifiably positive influence on a group of patients with recurrent spontaneous abortions.... The cytokine (GM-CSF), which is included in the EmbryoGen medium, verifiably improves the development of the embryo and the placenta and it is not a threat to the cultivation of human embryos. This broad-acting cytokine creates an environment for the in vitro cultivated embryos that rather resembles the in vivo environment (under natural conditions) and thus increases the ability of the embryos to implant (sink into the endometrium) and remain implanted (survive and continue to grow in the endometrium)."	30	http://www.city-fertility.com/
AneVivo TM	"Natural Fertilisation allows fertilisation of the eggs and sperm in an optimal maternal environment thanks to AneVivo, a permeable medical device, that allow fluid exchanges between the maternal environment and the embryo. Restoring this stage to the womb may result in an increase in the number of high quality embryos, both on a morphological and genetic level and improve the success rate....The preliminary results are encouraging. "	ID 31	http://www.completefertility.co.uk/
Quad therapy	"Quad Therapy is a combination of four different types of drugs, which help to address issues with the immune and clotting system in your body that may be preventing you becoming pregnant or the pregnancy progressing. Low dose aspirin, low dose Prednisolone, a form of heparin and progesterone work together to suppress an overactive immune response to a pregnancy and to regulate the clotting in your body, so that your embryo can implant and grow...not all patients benefit from it due to the	ID 29	https://www.manchesterfertility.com/

	varying causes of implantation failure and miscarriage."		
Natural cycle IVF	"CREATE Fertility is the first group of IVF clinics to offer successful and safe Natural Cycle IVF as a first option to patients. We are the largest provider of Natural Cycle IVF in the UK and have pioneered the practice of Natural IVF. Our Medical Director, Professor Geeta Nargund, is one of the world's foremost experts on Natural Cycle IVF. We are able to tailor treatment with no or low amounts of stimulation drugs, thereby giving you the best chance to have a baby with your own eggs. We have successfully treated hundreds of women with critically low ovarian reserve/low AMH/high FSH. We have also had some of the oldest IVF mothers in the world who have had babies with their own eggs. We do not have any selection criteria and will allow any woman to try IVF using their own eggs if they want to and are still ovulating (up to the age of 50).By avoiding stimulating drugs, the womb is more receptive to pregnancy. There is also evidence that babies born with Natural Cycle IVF are more likely to be born at full term and with a healthier birth weight."	ID 29	http://www.createhealth.org/
hysteroscopy (screening of womb using a camera)	"we may suggest a hysteroscopy (passing a flexible telescope in to the womb under general anaesthetic) if we suspect scar tissue formation or the presence of a fibroid or polyp inside the womb which needs to be removed. There is some evidence that this procedure itself, or performing an endometrial scratch, can increase implantation rates."	ID 45	http://www.ivfhammersmith.com/
Segmented IVF	"In segmentation of mild IVF cycle, the embryos are put back in a separate Natural cycle. By minimising stimulation and putting embryos back in a separate natural cycle, the environment of the uterus is more favourable for implantation. Transferring embryos into a healthy drug-free womb after a Natural cycle means that you are giving them the best possible chance of implantation. Research has shown that babies born after transfer in a Natural cycle have a statistically significant higher birth weight than babies conceived from embryos transferred within a conventional stimulated cycle. A baby's birth weight has a long-term impact on future health and development."	ID 33	http://www.createhealth.org/
Preimplantation genetic diagnosis PGD	"Preimplantation genetic diagnosis is a specialised treatment for couples who carry an inherited genetic defect that could cause serious health risks for their children, such as cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease or Huntington's disease. The Assisted Conception works closely with the Genetics Department to offer this service. We are the largest and most successful unit in the UK for PGD. We have had over 600 babies born as a result of this treatment."	ID 41	
array comparative genomic hybridisation (array CGH) subtype of PGS	"newer approaches [to PGS] comprising array CGH are of significant benefit, and the latest evidence from several clinics has been very encouraging. So far, there has only been one PGS trial using this sort of technology, conducted in the United States. In that	ID 39	http://www.gcrmbelfast.com/

study, the chance of an embryo transferred to the womb making a baby was found to be increased by more than 50% in IVF cycles where embryos were chosen for transfer based upon the results of PGS analysis"