

Letters to the Editor

Times 18.1.2019



Cap IVF prices

Sir, The call by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) for IVF clinics to be "more open" about extra treatments (report, Jan 15) is admirable, but it is not enough to prevent women being offered add-on treatments that have no proven benefit, come at great financial cost and carry potentially significant health risks. Not only do add-on treatments increase the cost of treatment hugely, but unnecessary and unproven laboratory interventions can be harmful and potentially increase epigenetic errors.

We urgently need a national register that holds information about add-on treatments, drugs and dosages administered to women during IVF treatment and early pregnancy, as this does not exist at present. It is only by collecting this information that we can be confident we are monitoring the safety and efficacy of add-on treatments.

If the HFEA is really serious about stopping clinics charging for extra treatments, then establishing an independent financial regulator, and placing a cap on how much can be charged per IVF cycle, is essential.

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