

Appendix 2 (as supplied by the authors): Classification of evidence levels

- 1a: Evidence obtained from meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials.
- 1b: Evidence obtained from at least one randomized controlled trial.

- 2a: Evidence obtained from at least one well-designed, controlled study without randomization.
- 2b: Evidence obtained from at least one other type of well-designed quasi-experimental study.

- 3: Evidence obtained from well-designed non-experimental descriptive studies, such as comparative studies, correlation studies and case studies.

- 4: Evidence obtained from expert committee reports or opinions and/or clinical experiences of respected authorities.

Source: US Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.¹

Reference

- 1. Shekelle PG, Woolf SH, Eccles M, et al. Clinical guidelines: developing guidelines. *BMJ* 1999;318:593-6.