

Appendix I: Levels of evidence and grading of recommendations

Levels of evidence

Ia Meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials

Ib At least one randomised controlled trial

IIa At least one well-designed controlled study without randomisation

IIb At least one other type of well-designed quasi-experimental study

III Well-designed non-experimental descriptive studies

IV Expert committee reports or opinions of respected authorities

Grading of recommendations

A Evidence at level Ia or Ib

B Evidence at level IIa, IIb or III

C Evidence at level IV