

Appendix B

Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)

Revised Grading System¹

Levels of evidence

1++ High-quality meta-analyses, systematic reviews of randomized controlled trials, or randomized controlled trials with a very low risk of bias.

1+ Well conducted meta-analyses, systematic reviews of randomized controlled trials, or randomized controlled trials with a low risk of bias.

1- Meta-analyses, systematic reviews of randomized controlled trials, or randomized controlled trials with a high risk of bias.

2++ High-quality systematic reviews of case-control or cohort studies, high-quality case-control or cohort studies with a very low risk of confounding, bias or chance, and a high probability that the relationship is causal.

2+ Well conducted case control or cohort studies with a low risk of confounding, bias or chance, and a moderate probability that the relationship is causal.

2- Case control or cohort studies with a high risk of confounding, bias or chance, and a significant risk that the relationship is not causal.

3 Non-analytical studies, e.g. case reports or case series.

4 Expert opinion.

20 **Grades of recommendation**

21 **A** At least one meta-analysis, systematic review or randomized controlled trial rated as **1++**, and
22 directly applicable to the target population; or a systematic review of randomized controlled
23 trials or a body of evidence consisting principally of studies rated as **1+**, directly applicable to
24 the target population, and demonstrating overall consistency of results.

25 **B** A body of evidence including studies rated as **2++**, directly applicable to the target population,
26 and demonstrating overall consistency of results; or extrapolated evidence from studies rated as
27 **1++** or **1+**.

28 **C** A body of evidence including studies rated as **2+**, directly applicable to the target population,
29 and demonstrating overall consistency of results; or extrapolated evidence from studies rated as
30 **2++**.

31 **D** Evidence level **3** or **4**; or extrapolated evidence from studies rated as **2+**.