Supplementary Table 2- Quality Assessment Criteria

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| **Level** | **Factor** | **Definition Factor** |  |
| **HIGH\*** | Objective  | a-priori, clear & specific hypotheses stated (population, exposure, outcome identified)  |
| Design | Identified study design (case-control, cohort, cross-sectional) |
| Sampling | a-priori power analysis reported OR clear inclusion, exclusion criteria reported  |
| Participant | Reports characteristics of study participants AND information on exposures and potential confounder AND Explains non-participation at each stage. |
| Control | Confounders controlled, control comparison used, equivalent groups, equivalent attrition and diversion between groups. Cross sectional: Clear description of matching methods, criteria  |
| Methods | Description permits replication - design, setting (location, dates, recruitment, exposure, follow-up, collection)  |
| Data | Attrition <10% OR use of intent to treat analysis OR provides adjusted analysis of missing data (stratification or multivariate regression) Reports unadjusted estimates AND confounder-adjusted estimates & 95% CI. Reports statistical methodology (reports added analysis on subgroups, interactions)  |
| Measures | Use of reliable and validated outcome measurement tool, Report on the validity and reliability of these measures |
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| **MOD** | Objective  | Specific hypotheses stated (population, exposure, outcome identified)  |
| Design | Only addressed as prospective, retrospective BUT CLEAR explanation of how, when data collection took place  |
| Sampling | Sampling Major details described.  |
| Participants | Sampling method clear for population group selection. |
| Control | Non equivalent groups OR unequal attention and division in comparison condition. Matching method unclear – minimal explanation of rational for choice of matching variables |
| Methods | Major Details described Specific dates of collection not mentioned only reports length of time |
| Data | Attrition 11 - 20% OR analysis of rates and group equivalency – Heterogeneity of sample reported |
| Measures | Use of reliable and validated outcome measurement tool NO report of calculated reliability and validity data |
|  |  |
| Objective  |  Unclear objective – failed to identify population, exposure outcome |
| **LOW** | Design | Not reported OR only addressed as prospective, retrospective design with NO explanation of how, when data collection took place |
| Sampling | no explanation, small convenience sample |
| Participants | No explanation recruitment, population selection.  |
| Control | No attempt made to control relevant confounders. No matching criteria explained or used for case-control study |
| Methods | Methods: inadequate description, not replicable |
| Data | Attrition >20%, or not analysed, or not reported |
|  | Measures | Non validation measures used for data collection |
| **Adapted from STROBE guidelines, JHNEBP guidelines** |  |

\* Only studies rated as high quality were included in the meta-analysis