

APPENDIX 1; Newcastle-Ottawa Scale

Questions from the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale (NOS) – Cohort Studies	
Domains Leading	Explanatory questions
Selection	1. Representativeness of the Exposed Cohort (1p) 2. Selection of the Non-Exposed Cohort (1p) 3. Ascertainment of Exposure (1p) 4. Demonstration That Outcome of Interest Was Not Present at Start of Study (1p)
Comparability	5. Comparability of Cohorts on the Basis of the Design or Analysis (2p)
Outcome	6. Assessment of Outcome (1p) 7. Was Follow-Up Long Enough for Outcomes to Occur (1p) 8. Adequacy of Follow Up of Cohorts (1p)
<p><i>All questions could be answered with 'yes' or 'no'.</i></p> <p><i>An assessment scale is available to award stars with a maximum score of 9: one for each question in the selection and outcome scale, and two for the comparability domain.</i></p> <p><i>A score of less than 5 stars represents a high risk of bias</i></p>	