Appendix 1. Methodological quality assessed based on the Newcastle-Ottawa quality assessment scale available from: http://www.ohri.ca/programs/clinical_epidemiology/nosgen.pdf [cited 2016 Oct 2] (Posting of the scale was permitted by Professor GA Wells, Department of Epidemiology and Community Medicine, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON, Canada).

NEWCASTLE-OTTAWA QUALITY ASSESSMENT SCALE COHORT STUDIES

Note: A study can be awarded a maximum of one star (*) for each numbered item within the 'Selection' and 'Outcome' categories. A maximum of two stars can be given for 'Comparability'

1. Selection
   1) Representativeness of the exposed cohort
      a) Truly representative of the average __________________ (describe) in the community*
      b) Somewhat representative of the average __________________ in the community*
      c) Selected group of users (eg., nurses, volunteers)
      d) No description of the derivation of the cohort
   2) Selection of the non-exposed cohort
      a) Drawn from the same community as the exposed cohort*
      b) Drawn from a different source
      c) No description of the derivation of the non-exposed cohort
   3) Ascertainment of exposure
      a) Secure record (eg., surgical records)*
      b) Structured interview*
      c) Written self-report
      d) No description
   4) Demonstration that outcome of interest was not present at start of study
      a) Yes*
      b) No

2. Comparability
   1) Comparability of cohorts on the basis of the design or analysis
      a) Study controls for ______________ (select the most important factor)*
      b) Study controls for any additional factor* (This criteria could be modified to indicate specific control for a second important factor)

3. Outcome
   1) Assessment of outcome
      a) Independent blind assessment*
      b) Record linkage*
      c) Self report
      d) No description
   2) Was follow-up long enough for outcomes to occur
      a) Yes (select an adequate follow-up period for outcome of interest)*
      b) No
   3) Adequacy of follow-up of cohorts
      a) Complete follow-up—all subjects accounted for*
      b) Subjects lost to follow-up unlikely to introduce bias - small number lost - > ____ % (select an adequate %) follow-up, or description provided of those lost)*
      c) Follow-up rate < ____ % (select an adequate %) and no description of those lost
      d) No statement