

Hierarchy of Evidence Guide

Appendix D

Note: Refer to the appropriate Evidence Appraisal Tool (Research [Appendix E] or Nonresearch [Appendix F]) to determine quality ratings.

	Evidence Level	Types of Evidence
Research Evidence (Appendix E)	Level I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimental study, randomized controlled trial (RCT) • Explanatory mixed methods design that includes only a Level I quantitative study • Systematic review of RCTs, with or without meta-analysis
	Level II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quasi-experimental study • Explanatory mixed methods design that includes only a Level II quantitative study • Systematic review of a combination of RCTs and quasi-experimental studies, or quasi-experimental studies only, with or without meta-analysis
	Level III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonexperimental study • Systematic review of a combination of RCTs, quasi-experimental and nonexperimental studies, or nonexperimental studies only, with or without meta-analysis. • Exploratory, convergent, or multiphasic mixed methods studies • Explanatory mixed methods design that includes only a Level III quantitative study • Qualitative study • Systematic review of qualitative studies with or without meta-synthesis
Nonresearch Evidence (Appendix F)	Level IV	<p>Opinion of respected authorities and/or nationally recognized expert committees or consensus panels based on scientific evidence. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical practice guidelines • Consensus panels/position statements
	Level V	<p>Based on experiential and non-research evidence. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping reviews • Integrative reviews • Literature reviews • Quality improvement, program or financial evaluation • Case reports • Opinion of nationally recognized expert(s) based on experiential evidence