

Appendix 4

Table A GRADE judgements for NMA of antibiotics for skin abscesses*

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	Direct evidence							Indirect evidence							Network estimate						
		Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Publication bias	Direct rating without imprecision	Direct is more precise than indirect imprecision	Direct rating with imprecision	Common comparator(s)	Treatment 1 vs first common comparator	Middle comparison	Treatment 2 vs final common comparator	Lowest of common direct comparisons Intransitivity	Indirect rating without imprecision	Imprecision	Indirect rating with imprecision	Higher rating of direct and indirect without incoherence	Imprecision	Network rating final			
No Abx	Early C	No	No	No	No	High	NA	-1	Mod													
No Abx	Late C									Early C	High	NA	High	High	No	High	-2	Low	High	NA	-2	Low
No Abx	TMP/SMX	-1	No	No	No	Mod	Yes	No	Mod	Clinda.	High	NA	High	High	No	High	-2	Low	High	No	No	Mod
No Abx	Clinda.	-1	No	No	No	Mod	Yes	-1	Mod	TMP/SMX	High	NA	High	High	No	High	-2	Low	High	No	No	Mod
Early C	Late C	No	No	No	No	High	NA	-1	Mod										High	NA	-1	Mod
Early C	TMP/SMX									No Abx	High	NA	High	High	No	High	-1	Mod	High	NA	-1	Mod
Early C	Clinda.									No Abx	High	NA	High	High	No	High	-1	Mod	High	NA	-1	Mod
Late C	TMP/SMX									Early C/No												
Late C	TMP/SMX									Abx	High	High	High	High	No	High	-1	Mod	High	NA	-1	Mod
Late C	Clinda.									Early C/No												
Late C	Clinda.									Abx	High	High	High	High	No	High	-1	Mod	High	NA	-1	Mod
TMP/SMX	Clinda.	No	No	No	No	High	Yes	-1	Mod	No Abx	High	NA	High	Mod	No	High	-2	Low	High	No	No	High

No Abx, no antibiotics; Early C, early generation (1st/2nd) cephalosporins; later generation (3rd/4th) cephalosporins; TMP/SMX, trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole; Clinda., clindamycin; Mod, Moderate; -1, rated down once because of serious concerns; -2, rated down twice because of very serious concern

*GRADE certainty ratings can be high, moderate, low, or very low. All comparisons started at high certainty and then were rated down if there were concerns with the GRADE domains listed. 'No' means that we judged there to not be any serious concerns with that domain for that comparison. '-1' means that we rated down the certainty by one category because of serious concerns and '-2' means that we rated down the certainty by two categories because of very serious concerns. For a detailed explanation of the GRADE domains and process for rating comparisons within a network meta-analysis, please see Puhan MA, et al. *BMJ*. 2014;349:g5630.