Table 49: Clinical Evidence Profile: home syringing kit with ear drops versus ear drops plus irrigation in GP clinic for earwax

Quality assessment							No of patients		Effect		Quality
No of studies	Design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	Home syringing kit with ear drops versus ear drops plus irrigation in GP clinic	Control	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute	
No impacted wax at follow-up (one to two weeks) (follow-up 1-2 weeks)											
1	randomised trials	serious[1]	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	serious[2]	none	50/104 (48.1%)	62.8%	RR 0.77 (0.6 to 0.98)	144 fewer per 1000 (from 13 fewer to 251 fewer)	LOW
Change in symptom score (scale 0-6, 6 high) (follow-up 1-2 days; Better indicated by lower values)											
1	randomised trials	serious[1]	no serious inconsistency	serious[3]	serious[2]	none	110	108	-	MD 0.45 lower (0.8 to 0.1 lower)	VERY LOW
Consulted again with wax-related symptoms in next two years (follow-up mean 2 years)											
1	randomised trials	very serious[1]	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	serious[2]	none	70/117 (59.8%)	72.7%	RR 0.82 (0.68 to 0.99)	131 fewer per 1000 (from 7 fewer to 233 fewer)	VERY LOW
Adverse event: otitis externa at follow-up (follow-up 1-2 weeks)											
1	randomised trials	very serious[1]	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	very serious[2]	none	1/97 (1%)	1.1%	RR 0.97 (0.06 to 15.27)	0 fewer per 1000 (from 10 fewer to 157 more)	VERY LOW
Adverse event: perforation at follow-up (follow-up 1-2 weeks)											
1	randomised trials	very serious[1]	no serious inconsistency	serious[4]	very serious[2]	none	1/97 (1%)	1.1%	RR 0.97 (0.06 to 15.27)	0 fewer per 1000 (from 10 fewer to 157 more)	VERY LOW

Adverse event: discomfort during treatment (follow-up 1-2 weeks)											
1	randomised trials	serious[1]	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	serious[2]	none	43/110 (39.1%)	32.4%	RR 1.21 (0.84 to 1.73)	68 more per 1000 (from 52 fewer to 237 more)	LOW
Adverse event: dizziness during treatment (follow-up 1-2 weeks)											
1	randomised trials	serious[1]	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	very serious[2]	none	14/110 (12.7%)	13%	RR 0.98 (0.49 to 1.96)	3 fewer per 1000 (from 66 fewer to 125 more)	VERY LOW

[1] Downgraded by 1 increment if the majority of the evidence was at high risk of bias, and downgraded by 2 increments if the majority of the evidence was at very high risk of bias
[2] Downgraded by 1 increment if the confidence interval crossed one MID or by 2 increments if the confidence interval crossed both MIDs
[3] Downgraded by 1 or 2 increments because the majority of evidence was based on a scale that had not been externally validated
[4] Downgraded by 1 or 2 increments because the outcome was shown to be unreliable (inability to ascertain lack of ear drum perforation prior to intervention)