

Supplemental Appendix 1: Definitions

A varicella related hospitalised case was defined as any child hospitalised for at least 24 h in a Belgian paediatric ward and for which the principal reason for hospitalisation was varicella or a directly related complication occurring over a 21 days period following the first skin lesions.

Varicella was defined on clinical grounds as a subject presenting with a typical clinical picture of maculopapulovesicular rash on skin or mucosa (Heininger U, Seward JF. Varicella. *Lancet* 2006; 368:1365–76).

A vesicular rash was considered as mild, moderate or severe if it corresponded to the presence of < 50, 50-500 and > 500 lesions, respectively.

A complicated case was defined as any child hospitalised for varicella who presented on admission or developed during hospital stay one or more of the following varicella-related complications: Skin infections, haemorrhagic vesicular rash, disseminated purpura, staphylococcal scalded skin syndrome, cellulitis, abscess, pneumonia, osteomyelitis, septic arthritis, myositis, adenitis, fasciitis, hepatitis, severe anorexia/dehydration, eye involvement, neurological issues, haematological disturbances and Reye's syndrome.