

**Additional file 4: Clarity of definitions of Back pain: Prospective studies**

Ref (year of pub)	Area of BP (1 point)	Recall period (1 point)						Type (1 point)	Severity described	Consequences reported	Attempted to collect valid data (1 point)	Conclusion
	Location	Now	Past week	Past month	Past year	> 1 year	pain ever	-1 <sup>st</sup> ever -Episodic -Ongoing -?		-Seek care -Downtime -Disability		Clear definition of BP (x/4)
[9] Aatun, (2016)	MB/LB						X	- - - -?	No	- - -	Diagram used, pilot study of the questionnaire	3/4
[10] Auvinen, (2010)	LB			X (6 mth)				- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -	Diagram used	2/4
[11] Balague', (2010)	LB		X	X	X			- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -Disability	Used diagram	2/4
[12] Deere, (2012)	MB/LB	X		X (6 mth)				- - - -?	Yes	- - -	Used a pre-validated questionnaire. Diagram used.	3/4
[13] Feldman, (2002)	LB			X (6 mth)				- - - -?	No	- - -	NR	2/4
[4] Feldman, (2001)	LB			X (6 mth)				- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -Disability	NR	2/4
[14] Feldman, (1999)	LB			X (6 mth)				- - - -?	No	- - -	NR	2/4
[15] Franz, (2017)	MB/LB		X					- -Episodic -Ongoing -	No	- - -	Weekly SMS tracking	<b>4/4</b>

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[16] Franz, (2016)	MB/LB		X					- -Episodic -Ongoing -	No	- - -	Weekly SMS tracking	4/4
[17] Gill, (2014)	MB/LB			X				- - - -?	No	- - -	NR	2/4
[18] Hebert, (2019)	MB/LB		X					- -Episodic -Ongoing -	No	- - -	SMS tracking	4/4
[19] Hestbaek, (2006)	LBP				X			- -Episodic -Ongoing -	No	- - -	Used pre-validated questionnaire. Diagram used.	4/4
[20] Hestbaek, (2006)	LBP				X			- -Episodic -Ongoing -	No	- - -	Used pre-validated questionnaire. Diagram used.	4/4
[21] Hestbaek, (2006)	LBP				X			- -Episodic -Ongoing -	No	- - -	Used pre-validated questionnaire. Diagram used.	4/4
[22] Janssens, (2011)	?			X (3 mth)				- - - -?	No	- - -	NR	1/4
[23] Jones, (2009)	LB			X				- - - -?	No	- - -	Diagram used	2/4
[24] Jones, (2003)	LB			X				- - - -?	No	- - -	Diagram used	2/4

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[25] Kanchanomai, (2015)	LB			X ( 3mth)				- - - -?	No	- - -	Diagram used	2/4
[26] Kroner- Herwig (2017)	?			X (6 mth)				- - - -?	No	- - -	NR	1/4
[27] Mattila, (2008)	LB				X			- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -	Used ICD-10 diagnosis codes	2/4
[28] Mikkonen, (2016)	LB			X (6 mth)				- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -	NR	2/4
[29] Mikkonen, (2013)	LB			X (6 mth)				- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -	Diagram used	2/4
[30] Mikkonen, (2008)	LB			X (6 mth)				- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -	Diagram used	2/4
[31] Nissinen, (1994)	LB	X	X	X	X		X	- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -	Diagram used	2/4
[32] Sano, (2015)	LB	X					X	- - - -?	No	- - -	Diagram used	2/4
[33] Sjolie, (2004)	LB				X		X	- - - -?	No	-Seek care - -Disability	Diagram used	2/4

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		Now	Past week	Past month	Past year	> 1 year	pain ever					
[34] Smith, (2017)	LB			X				- - - -?	No	-Seek care -Downtime -Disability	Used pre-validated questionnaire	3/4
[35] Szita, (2018)	LB/MB			X				- - - -?	No	-Seek care -Downtime -	Pilot study of questionnaire.	3/4
[36] Szpalski, (2002)	LB	?	?	?	?	?	?	- - - -?	Yes	- - -	NR	1/4
[37] Tobias, (2013)	MB/LB			X				- - - -?	Yes	- - -Disability	Used pre-validated questionnaire	3/4

BP: back pain, LB: low back, MB: mid back, NR: not reported, mth: months