### Table 8. GRADE evidence profile, Recommendation 8

**Question:** Tocilizumab compared to no tocilizumab for hospitalized patients with COVID-19  
**Last updated 2/17/2021; last reviewed 9/14/2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certainty assessment</th>
<th>№ of patients</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Certainty</th>
<th>Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>№ of studies</td>
<td>Study design</td>
<td>Risk of bias</td>
<td>Inconsistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mortality (follow up: range 28 days to 30 days)</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8</td>
<td>randomized trials</td>
<td>not serious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clinical deterioration (follow up: range 14 days to 30 days)</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6,8</td>
<td>randomized trials</td>
<td>serious c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Serious adverse events</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,e</td>
<td>randomized trials</td>
<td>serious c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GRADE Working Group grades of evidence**

- **High certainty:** We are very confident that the true effect lies close to that of the estimate of the effect
- **Moderate certainty:** We are moderately confident in the effect estimate: The true effect is likely to be close to the estimate of the effect, but there is a possibility that it is substantially different
- **Low certainty:** Our confidence in the effect estimate is limited: The true effect may be substantially different from the estimate of the effect
- **Very low certainty:** We have very little confidence in the effect estimate: The true effect is likely to be substantially different from the estimate of effect

**Risk of bias:** Study limitations

- **Inconsistency:** Unexplained heterogeneity across study findings
- **Indirectness:** Applicability or generalizability to the research question
- **Imprecision:** The confidence in the estimate of an effect to support a particular decision
- **Publication bias:** Selective publication of studies

**CI:** Confidence interval; **RR:** Risk ratio

**Explanations**

a. Although some studies did not blind participants or investigators, this is unlikely to affect the mortality outcome.
b. 95% CI includes benefits as well as harms.
c. Some studies lacked blinding and due to the mechanism of tocilizumab (reduction in inflammatory marker), unblinding likely occurred in the blinded studies.
d. Definition of clinical deterioration varied, with all studies including need for ventilation and death, but other studies included need for ICU admission (2 studies) or PaO2/FiO2 ratio of less than 150 mmHg (1 study).
e. The 95% CI includes both potential for harm as well as benefit; Few events reported do not meet the optimal information size and suggest fragility in the estimate.

References