EMBASE
224 potentially relevant papers identified

MEDLINE
278 potentially relevant papers identified

502 papers identified from electronic search

86 duplicate papers removed

416 selected for title screening

354 studies removed using title screening

62 studies identified for abstract screening

26 studies removed using abstract screening

36 studies identified for detailed evaluation

28 excluded after data extraction

Reasons for exclusion

Data reported in earlier paper 3
Recurrent stroke included 1
Other diseases included 1
Unknown if 1st stroke only 4
Definition of stroke unknown 4
Gap in data collection 2
No incidence rates calculated 4
Only TIA assessed 1
Subset of population 1
No verification 2
Verification % unknown 1
Incomplete ascertainment 8
Not WHO/ICD definition 2
Not a representative pop. 4
Non-UK population studied 1
Unknown if reliable denom. 2
Case ascertainment unknown 1
Cross sectional study 1
Years of study not reported 1
No denominator reported 1
Total 45*

* some excluded for multiple reasons

39 studies identified for detailed evaluation

11 studies identified based on full paper

5 papers removed for duplicate data

12 studies identified based on full paper

3 papers removed as data unavailable

1 study identified from contacting authors

5 studies included in final review