Author's response to reviews

Title: Chronic low back pain is associated with reduced vertebral bone mineral measures in community-dwelling adults.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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Dr Frank Roemer
BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders
Re: MS 1000158056637145 - Chronic low back pain is associated with reduced vertebral bone mineral measures in community-dwelling adults.

Thank you for your email on 10 February 2012. I am pleased to be able to respond to the additional reviewer’s comments (reviewer 3 – Jongbae Park), as outlined point-by-point below. The manuscript has been revised using track changes. Thank you for considering this revised manuscript for publication in *BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders*.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr Andrew Briggs
Chief author.
Response to reviewers

Reviewer 1: Jun Iwamoto

No further revisions required

Reviewer 2: Frances Williams

No further revisions required

Reviewer 3: Jongbae Park

1. “The aim of this study was to examine the association between vertebral bone mineral measures acquired using lateral-projection DXA and CLBP in a population of middle-aged adults.” does not match with “We hypothesized that the association between CLBP and vertebral bone mineral measures would be greater for those derived from lateral-projection methods compared to PA-projection measures.” Which is the primary goal of this small analytical study, clinical correlation or diagnostic superiority of the lateral-projection methods?

The primary aim of our study was to examine, using appropriate regression models, the association between the presence of CLBP and vertebral bone mineral measures, as stated in the Background. Diagnostic superiority was not assessed, as this would require a different study design and analytic approach (eg sensitivity and specificity analyses). To address the reviewer’s concern, the final sentence of the Background section has been removed.

2. It is somewhat doubtful that the findings reported here justify the lengthy discussion, and the conclusion is based on the very findings.

The reviewer raises a similar point to the points raised by the reviewers who assessed the original version of the manuscript. In the revised version of the paper we submitted on 6 January 2012, the length of the discussion was considerably reduced and the limitations of the small sample size emphasised.