Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 19 December 2011

Reviewer: Frances Williams

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written manuscript but it is trying to do too much. It is advocating the use of a new technology (lateral projection DXA scan) to field which is already advanced further than the authors' extensive literature review reflects.

The introduction ignores large literature on disc degeneration (including studies of 1000s using MRI) and its relationship with LBP and, more recently, BMD. At the very least comparison should be made with conventional DXA results in the same sample.

The sample size is too small (29 cases) for a decent epidemiological study. It has been shown using MRI that degenerative change starts in young adults, thus a sample using an upper age limit of 60 will definitely include a substantial proportion of subjects with lumbar disc degeneration (LDD).

Extensive discussion and 80 references suggest there is little novel to discuss pertaining to scant data collected in this study.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests