Reviewer's report

Title: Rheumatoid arthritis and incident fracture in women: A case-control study

Version: 2 Date: 12 August 2013

Reviewer: Emma Stanmore

Reviewer's report:

The authors have conducted a case-control study to examine fracture incidence in women with RA in the geographical region of south-eastern Australia. Although it is already known that people with RA have an increased risk of fracture this study reports that women with RA sustained vertebral fracture at twice frequency and usefully adds to the body of knowledge and includes findings on fracture location which may be of interest to the readership of BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders. The question posed by the authors are well defined and the methods are appropriate and well described. The writing style is clear and concise.

Major Compulsory Revisions

a) A number of studies have already reported the increased risk of vertebral fractures in patients with RA and this study needs to clearly state its original findings beyond previously published work.

b) It appears that hip fractures were underrepresented in the RA population, although patients with RA are reported to have an increased risk of hip fracture compared to healthy individuals without RA. In the discussion the authors should clearly state this difference between this and other studies.

c) After age-adjustment, the fracture rates were similar between the RA patients and controls. It has been reported in other studies that patients with RA have an increased risk of fractures compared with controls. The authors should state the reasons why the fracture rates were not different between the two groups.

Minor essential revisions

Please reference International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9)

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests