Reviewer's report

Title: The Osteoporosis Care Gap in Canada

Version: 1 Date: 15 September 2003

Reviewer: David J Torgerson

Reviewer's report:

General

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Minor Compulsory Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The paper was a systematic review, the authors should state how many papers were identified in various stages of their electronic search how were they identified, for example, which were identified by personal knowledge and which were identified electronically. In Table 1 the authors describe the numbers of fractures during follow-up, can they also put the length of follow-up and calculate the incidence rate. The follow-up fracture rate seems very high, which confirms the view that the population were at very high risk of fracture but to be sure we need to see the length of follow-up. I would also like to see some more details of the studies they identified it would be helpful for the authors to try and grade the quality of the studies, for example, were follow-up treatments and fractures self-reported or were these data derived from medical records? How did the studies choose their sample sizes? You might amend some of the widely available quality scores about (QUORUM statement for example). You also need to put in a table somewhere against each study what treatments for fracture prevention were available for clinicians at the time the study took place (some treatments may not have been available). Also I would like to see the prevalence of bone mass measurements reported in each study after fracture as most guidelines suggest that before anti-resorptive treatment is given BMD should be measured.

Advice on publication: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:
I have undertaken consultancy and received speaker's fees etc from pharmaceutical companies who manufacture osteoporosis medication. Publication of this could increase use of their drugs.