Reviewer's report

Title: Effect of duration of diabetes on bone mineral density: A population study on East Asian males

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Reviewer: Lee Shepstone

Reviewer's report:
Overall, this is an interesting paper that has been well written.

From the tables (and a lesser extent the text), it would appear that the authors have applied weights to individual observations. Table 1, for example, indicates that 3383 individuals were included in the study but the number 4 370 109 is also included. Could the authors clarify exactly what has been done here? Does the 4 370 109 merely indicate the size of the population represented? The size of the standard errors indicate that the sample size used is 3383 but has some weighting system been used in anyway?

Page 3 line 37 "...so determining the BMD is the best approach." This needs expanding. From the sentences above this, it appears clear that BMD is not necessarily a good predictor of fracture risk in type 2 DM patients. The authors have chosen to assess BMD rather than bone microstructure as the latter is not possible. The implications need some discussion here in the Background and perhaps more so in the Discussion.

A large number of individuals were excluded due to missing BMD values. Could the authors comment on this? Is there any reason why those missing BMD values would be different from those with BMD values? Is there a possible bias here?

Some more minor points:
Page 3 lines 49 - 53. "Generally, men have worse smoking and..." A reference may be useful if possible.

Page 3 line 54. "...men are approximately 70% less frequently screened for ..." Do the authors mean 'less frequently' or 'less likely'? 

Page 4 line 40. "...and sampling unit were selected..." should be "...and sampling units..."

Page 6 line 29. A reference for the Friedewald equation may be useful.

Page 8 and Table 2. Presumably the authors have applied the classic Bonferroni correction, simply dividing the initial significance level by 3 (the number of between group comparisons)? This would imply that, when comparing groups, a p-value of 0.0167 would be taken as statistically significant. This seems at odds with the value in table 2 footnote - is the latter a typo?

Page 11 line 50. "Hip fracture is the most risky osteoporotic fracture..." This needs re-wording. Most serious fracture, perhaps?

Page 12 line 13 - 16. "This study is the first to indicate decreased femoral neck BMD in diabetic patients..." Surely this is exactly what it didn't do? The reverse is true.

Page 12 lines 31-35 "Moreover, femoral neck BMD declined ..." This sentence is very unclear and ambiguous in meaning. Could the authors please clarify.

Tables: The summary of continuous variables as means and standard errors would be more useful as means and standard deviations.

Table 1: There is a p-value missing from the 6th line (i.e. comparing proportions in low income).
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.
Unable to assess

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