**INTRODUCTION**

Osteoporosis is a condition which places a burden on the health care system and continues to increase in prevalence as the population ages. This research presents the data relating to the prevalence of osteoporosis and osteopenia and its associations among participants in a population-based cohort study.

**METHODS**

The North West Adelaide Health Study is a representative longitudinal cohort study of people aged 18 years and over living in the north west region of Adelaide. The original sample (n=4060) was randomly selected and recruited by computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) to participate in a clinic assessment. In Stage 2 of the study (2004-06), information regarding the prevalence of musculoskeletal conditions was included. The self-reported prevalence of osteoporosis was determined using CATI and participants attending the clinic who were aged 50 years and over were offered a DXA scan. Sunlight exposure was also determined from a self-complete questionnaire.

**RESULTS**

Overall, n=3502 respondents participated in the CATI component of the study, with 3.8% (95% CI 3.2-4.5) reporting that they had been told by a doctor that they had osteoporosis. Age, sex, income and education were all significantly associated with osteoporosis (Table 1) and 14.4% (95% CI 12.1-17.1) of respondents who had gone through menopause had osteoporosis (Table 2). Of those respondents identified as having osteoporosis, 23.3% stated that they had been told by a doctor that they had osteoporosis (Table 3).

**CONCLUSIONS**

Osteoporosis exists within the community and is associated with demographic factors. However, a large proportion of participants with low bone density have not been previously identified by their doctor. Those with self-reported osteoporosis were also more likely to have had a fall and sustained a fracture and generally had less sun exposure.