

**HEALTH REPORT FROM THE MEETING OF THE
WSS JOINT HEALTH GROUP
HELD ON 21st September 2019**

GLAUCOMA

James Oliver conducted an eye testing session at the WSSC Championship Show and we are pleased to report that as well as the dogs booked for certificated tests we had approx. 8 dogs of 8 years and over that came for the research project.

Of the other dogs that were tested the results are as follows:

Grade 0: 3 dogs

Grade 1: 3 dogs

Grade 2: 2 dogs

Grade 3: 0 dogs

'I think I examined 8 dogs FOC and no certificate was issued but verbal results were given to the owners. The majority of dogs were unchanged but two dogs demonstrated mild progression.' James Oliver.

There is one case of clinical Glaucoma and samples and information have been supplied to James. I have the owners permission to publish the details.

Sherdrew Modern Girl. Tested at 10yrs and diagnosed clinically affected.

Sire: Sh Ch Ferndel Storyteller to Glenbrows JW ShCM

Dam: Sherdrew Conways Girl

FITTING

One new overseas case with a UK parent:

Sara Our Loyal Welsh

Sire: Julita Ranger Dam: Jayne Our Loyal Welsh

A few cases are appearing on Facebook and we do try to follow these up. One of these dogs fitted as a result of another condition. Please let us know if you have a dog that has fits. Fitting happens and the only way that we can help to produce a test for this is by everyone working with The Joint Health Group and The Animal Health Trust. We are working together to try to prevent other dogs from suffering from this condition.

Please realise that if your dog has fits that you are not at fault or the breeder. The more information that is available the closer we move towards the test that we are all waiting for. Please help us! Contact: arlene.tester@mailfence.com.

CANCER SURVEY

Mark Dunning has provided this update:

There have been a few more surveys completed which is good.

At present we have 29 Welsh Springers with one of those a historic owner not current.

As per our previous exchanges the problem we have is that many of the surveys have not been completed for dogs with cancer.

CANINE GENOME PROJECT

77 breeds have signed up to the project since its official launch, all donating at least £1000. Some breeds have chosen to pay for 2 genomes to be sequenced (2 dogs) to date £150,000 has been donated to this project by The Kennel Club and the breeds.

89 Genomes have been sequenced and analysis is well under way. Of these 69 are affected with a health disorder that is of concern within breeds. 20 Genomes are of healthy dogs and are Controls.

Analysis of some Genomes is being undertaken at the AHT. Data from 29 dogs have been shared with 17 Research Groups from Europe and USA.

There is a lot of variation within the Canine Genome. Most is neutral, some is positive (or advantageous) some is deleterious (contributes to risk of disease). The challenge is to identify the deleterious variants from the rest.

Complex Diseases include Epilepsy, that is it has multiple variants in more than one gene can combine to cause risk of disease. Environmental factors can also contribute to risk – e.g. may be a trigger for disease onset if an individual has a set of risk variants.

Aim of the research:

To develop predictive tools to identify dogs at greater risk of these diseases.

To better understand the biology underlying disease development.

Breed Study

Current focus:

Border Collie

Italian Spinone

Future breeds will (5 in first instance) be selected after a review

HIP DYSPLASIA No new information

SARDS

Two unrelated dogs affected with Sudden Acquired Retinal Degeneration Syndrome (aka, SARDS). came to the WSSC Rally Day. This is a problem that we have not come across before in our breed although it affects all breeds of dogs. It is not hereditary and it appears suddenly as the name says. We are interested if there are any more cases within our breed, if you have dog with this condition or know of one then please ask the owner to contact us. (I have the details for the two previously mentioned).

Some information about the condition:

SARDS affects the thin-layered retinas which receive visual input and then transport this information to the brain via the optic nerve. In dogs with SARDS, the photoreceptors (rods and cones) and possibly the nerve fibre layers within the retinas

undergo degenerative changes. The end result is complete blindness. These changes are microscopic in nature—one cannot detect them by performing a basic eye exam. Therefore, the diagnosis of SARDS is made based on the patient's history, the presence of partial to complete blindness in both eyes, normal appearing retinas, and characteristic changes on an electroretinogram (ERG). The ERG is a test used to evaluate photoreceptor function and is performed by veterinarians who are specialists in ophthalmology .

All dogs with SARDS develop:

- ⌚ Complete and permanent blindness over a rapid course (typically days to weeks)
- ⌚ Stumbling
- ⌚ Difficulty navigating at night
- ⌚ A failure to track treats

During the weeks and months preceding their blindness, most SARDS-affected dogs also experience marked increases in appetite and/or thirst with subsequent weight gain and changes in urinary behaviour

Diagnosing SARDS in dogs

Testing for hormonal imbalances (Diabetes & Cushings) that classically cause these symptoms is commonly pursued and typically comes up empty. Savvy veterinarians consider the possibility of SARDS before loss of vision becomes apparent. In most cases, it is not until vision wanes that the diagnosis of SARDS becomes suspect.

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Secretary JHG