

Dear Scottish terrier owners,

The School of Veterinary Science, University of Nottingham is pleased to announce a new collaboration with the UK Scottish terrier group. This is part of the School's longitudinal health initiative in pedigree dogs. The new project will look to recruit UK Scottish terriers as part of an ongoing review of the general health within the breed. The dogs enrolled in the study will have a lifestyle questionnaire completed along with an oral DNA swab taken. The information gathered from these will enable a picture to be generated up of the health of Scottish terriers in the UK. The breed is reported to suffer from a number of particular conditions for which we know very little in the UK population as most of the research and information is from the USA. We are therefore beginning this study to be able to understand more about the various conditions that affect the UK population of Scotties. In particular we hope to identify important factors that might influence the development of particular diseases including liver disease and various cancers. The diseases themselves are likely to be due to a combination of genetics, the lifestyles and the management of the dogs. It is therefore very important that information on both the lifestyle and management of the dogs is gathered as well as the genetics. As a result of this information we will be uniquely positioned to highlight the differences that exist between those dogs that are suffering with a particular disease and those that are free from it. By following the dogs over the length of their lives we will be able to review trends in particular diseases and also the long-term factors that may affect their development. Involvement in this project is voluntary but we hope very much it will be seen as a positive step in influencing the future of Scottish terrier health in the UK. The project is also anonymous and so only the researchers at the University of Nottingham will know those people taking part. It is hoped that by maintaining a strictly anonymous project we will encourage all Scottish terrier owners and breeders to get involved.

The health and lifestyle questionnaire will be available to participating owners and breeders via email, conventional mail or by completion online. Jenny Morris, the Scottish terrier health coordinator - will be responsible for sending out the DNA swabs and receiving the questionnaires. It is hoped that this particular project will begin early in 2016.

In addition to this initial phase of the study, we are looking to obtain samples from any Scottish terriers unfortunate enough to be suffering with cancer. Nottingham Vet School has active research projects investigating a number of aspects of cancer in dogs. These projects are investigating the factors that influence the development of cancer along with potential new treatments and

ways of improving the outcomes of dogs suffering with them. The current projects have made some very important discoveries in a number of canine cancers. These specific projects have been successful as a result of obtaining small tissue samples from suspected cancers when they are being biopsied or surgically removed by vets in general practice. These tissue samples are then further studied under the microscope and by genetic analysis. We are offering a free histopathology service for your vets to help with making the initial diagnosis of cancer. We would therefore ask those of you whose dogs are having biopsies taken of suspected cancers to be in touch with either Jenny Morris (scotchmore@btinternet.com) or the Vet School directly using the dog breed research email address on sv-dogs@nottingham.ac.uk

We will then contact the vets directly and discuss the health initiative and provide them with all the supplies for the samples. Again the results will be anonymous however the identity of the tumour and the results of the research on each sample will be available to the owners of the individual dog.

We are very excited about working with such a wonderful breed and hope very much that the many aspects of this project will have a positive impact on the breed and that the results of can be translated into improvements in the health of the individual UK Scotties.

With very best wishes

Mark Dunning, Nigel Mongan and Simone de Brot
On behalf of the Nottingham Canine breed health research group