



# VetCompass

Health Surveillance for UK Companion Animals

## Data from 1.5 million UK animals..... & still growing!

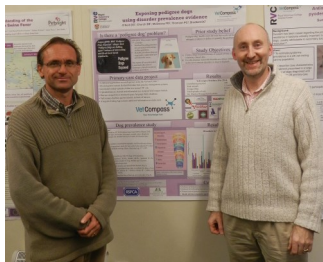
### Fantastic 2014 for VetCompass

VetCompass passed a notable milestone in July 2014 & now contains data on over **1.5 million animals**. Information contributed now relates to **over 10 million episodes of care** at nearly 300 veterinary practices across the UK. Many thanks to all our participating practices, their clients & pets for their ongoing support.

### First International conference on EBVM

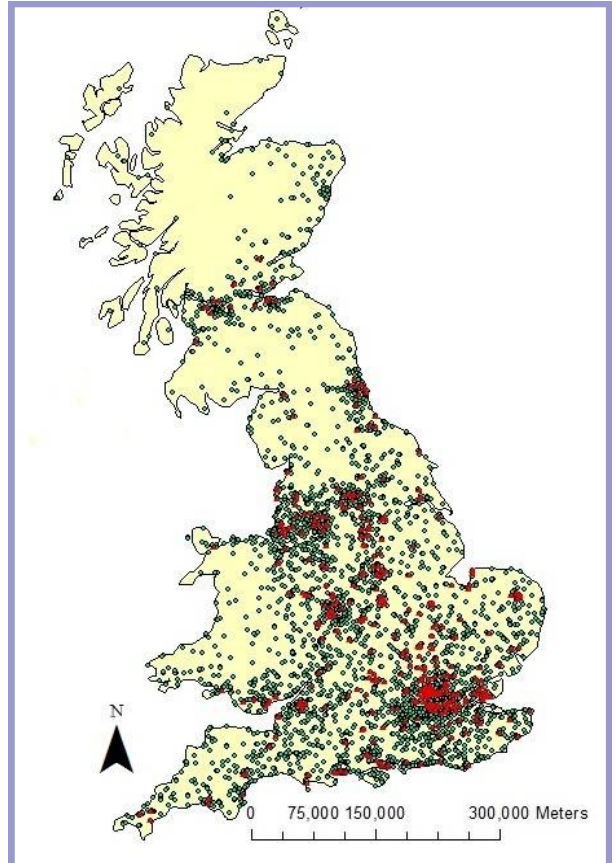


Evidence-based veterinary medicine (EBVM) took a giant step forward in 2014 with the 1st International EBVM Network Conference in October. Organised by RCVS Knowledge, the meeting was a huge success, treating 250 delegates to a diverse programme. The whole Team were lucky enough to attend, representing VetCompass through oral & poster presentations,



Dave Brodbelt & Dan O'Neill

with Dan O'Neill's entry ("Exposing Pedigree Dogs using disorder prevalence data") awarded 2nd prize in the conference poster competition. All 4 VetCompass conference posters are available on our website, along with video highlights of a fantastic event which we hope will be the first of many in this important field.



Locations of participating practices (red dots) amongst all registered veterinary clinics in the UK (green dots).  
July 2014

### VetCompass officially welcomes the PDSA!

We are delighted to announce participation of the Peoples Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) in VetCompass from November 2014.

Steve Howard, Head of Clinical Services, on behalf of PDSA:

*'As the largest UK veterinary charity, PDSA provides free veterinary*

*services to sick & injured animals & promotes responsible pet care. PDSA cares for more than 400,000 pets & provides 2.7 million treatments each year. Alongside our provision of frontline clinical care, PDSA has recognised the benefits that its large clinical database can bring to important nationwide epidemiological initiatives such as VetCompass. We hope that our involvement in this project will aid in the further development of evidence based veterinary medicine.'*



Team member Dan O'Neill speaks for us all in welcoming the PDSA on board: *'The involvement of PDSA will be hugely valuable to VetCompass, augmenting our existing database with their vital insight into health issues affecting PDSA patients across the UK.'*

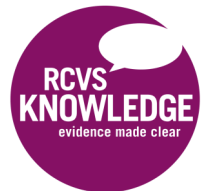


For more information & project updates visit [www.rvc.ac.uk/VetCompass](http://www.rvc.ac.uk/VetCompass)

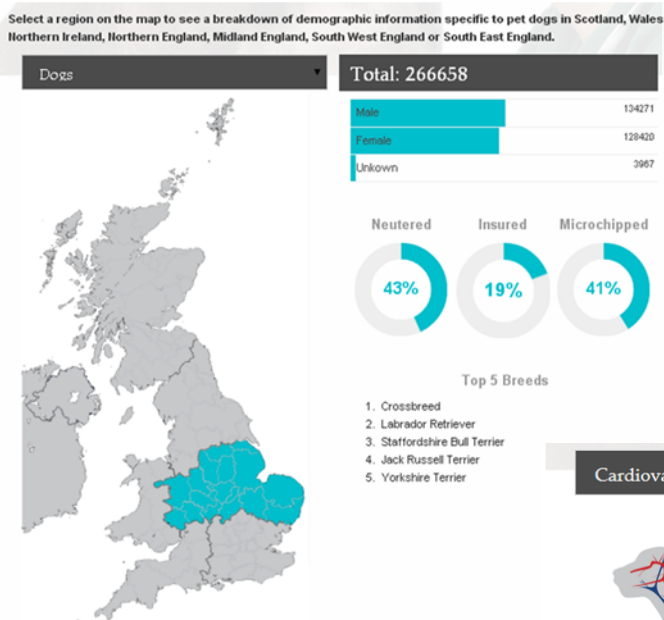
# Explore VetCompass findings online!

The VetCompass Team are always keen to share project output as widely as possible. Publishing in peer reviewed journals, speaking at meetings & presenting at conferences are important elements of this, but we're always looking for new ways to make these vital data accessible to the broadest range of interested parties.

Funding from a recent RCVS Knowledge Trust award has allowed us to develop these ideas further, and **we are excited to announce the launch of two online, interactive Infographic displays, available now via the VetCompass website!**

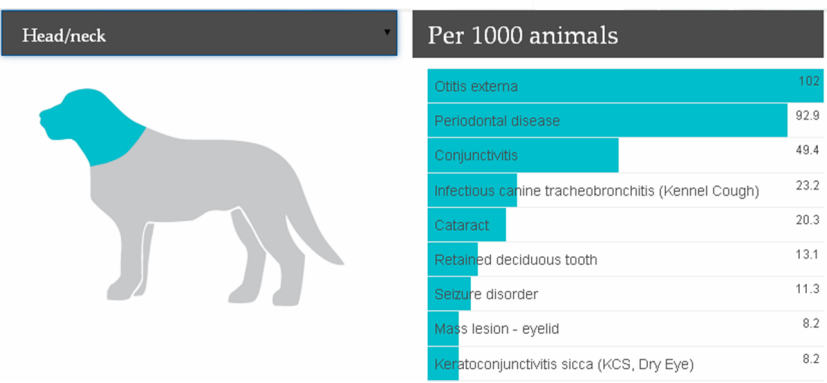
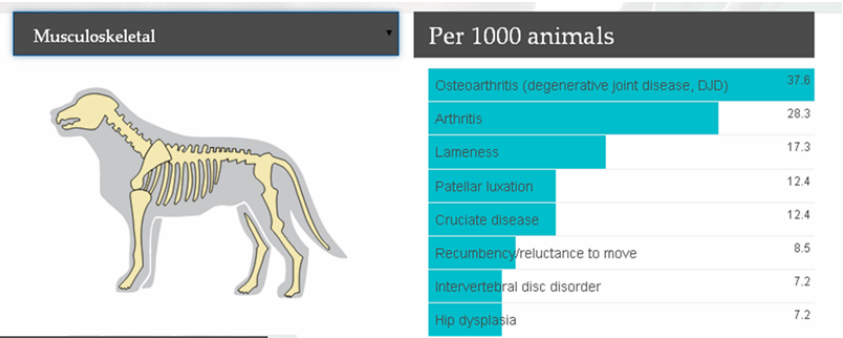
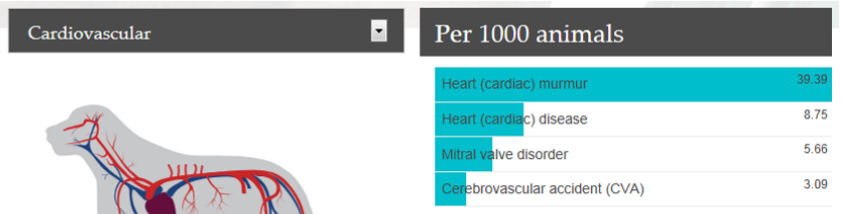


These visual tools break down demographic & disease prevalence estimates for UK dogs based on the huge volume of data currently held in our VetCompass database.



The Geographic Infographic summarises demographic information on UK pet dogs, based on 865,977 individual dogs attending 368 VetCompass-participating clinics. Information is presented for the UK as a whole & by broad geographical region.

([www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass/infographics/uk](http://www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass/infographics/uk))



([www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass/infographics/canine](http://www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass/infographics/canine))

The Anatomic Infographic displays the most common disorders recorded in a random sample of 3884 dogs attending 89 participating clinics over a four year period (1st September 2009 to 31st March 2013).

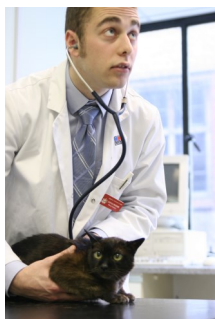
Users can select a body region or system from the menu to see recorded frequencies of related disorders in these dogs displayed in a clear, visual format.

**Our thanks go to the RCVS Knowledge Trust**  
We hope to extend this initiative to our feline data soon!

## Recent VetCompass research output



### Peer-reviewed journal publications



#### Prevalence of disorders recorded in cats attending primary-care veterinary practices in England

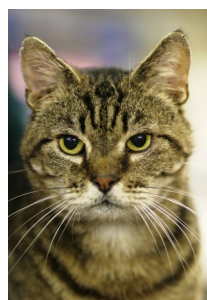
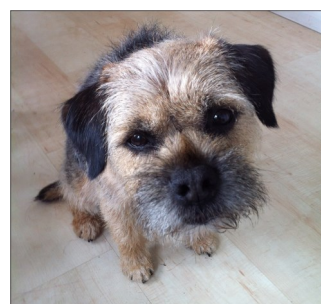
O'Neill DG, Church DB, McGreevy PD, Thomson PC, Brodbelt DC  
*Veterinary Journal*; August 2014 [[OPEN ACCESS](#)]

This study describes the disorders most commonly diagnosed in a sample of 3584 cats attending 91 veterinary clinics in England. Differences between the disorders recorded in crossbred and purebred cats were explored.

#### Prescribing practices of primary-care veterinary practitioners in dogs diagnosed with bacterial pyoderma

Summers JF, Hendricks A, Brodbelt DC  
*BMC Veterinary Research*; October 2014 [[OPEN ACCESS](#)]

This study describes patient signalment, disease characteristics and treatment prescribed in a large number of UK, primary-care canine pyoderma cases. The estimated prevalence of canine pyoderma in the UK vet-visiting population is also reported.



#### Feline hyperthyroidism reported in primary-care veterinary practices in England: prevalence, associated factors and spatial distribution

Stephens MJ, O'Neill DG, Church DB, McGreevy PD, Thomson PC, Brodbelt DC  
*The Veterinary Record*; November 2014

This study highlights feline hyperthyroidism as a high prevalence disease in cats attending primary-care veterinary practices in England. Certain breeds and purebred cats overall had lower odds of hyperthyroidism than non-purebred cats.

### Other VetCompass-related articles

#### Progress in purebred dog health since the Bateson report of 2010

O'Neill D  
*The Veterinary Record*; September 2014

In 2010, the Bateson report proposed recommendations to address issues relating to purebred dog health.

In this editorial, Dan O'Neill discusses the actions that have been taken in light of these recommendations, including his VetCompass PhD which explored the epidemiology of disorders reported in companion animals in England.



#### VetCompass: why you should be taking notice of it

Morris K  
*Veterinary Practice*; August 2014

One of the Bateson Report's most significant recommendations was expansion of a practice-based companion animal health surveillance initiative in development at the RVC—the then fledgling VetCompass project.

In this article Kevin Morris of Medivet discusses the development and potential of VetCompass which, he believes, could revolutionise veterinary care across the world.



# Canine DMVD: Retrospective study findings

As part of her PhD studies within VetCompass, team member Maddy Mattin has been using project data to investigate clinically important aspects of degenerative mitral valve disease (DMVD) in UK dogs.



Here's a sneak preview of the results, summarising some key findings:

## Study population

111,967 dogs attending 93 practices during a 2 year period.

## Estimated UK prevalence

Identification of 405 *diagnosed* cases suggested a minimum UK DMVD prevalence estimate of **0.4%**. However, **3.5%** (3962) of study dogs were classified as *possible or diagnosed* DMVD cases.



## Definitions

Diagnosed cases: dogs with stated diagnosis of DMVD (or synonym) in records.  
Possible cases: dogs with a documented heart murmur consistent with DMVD.

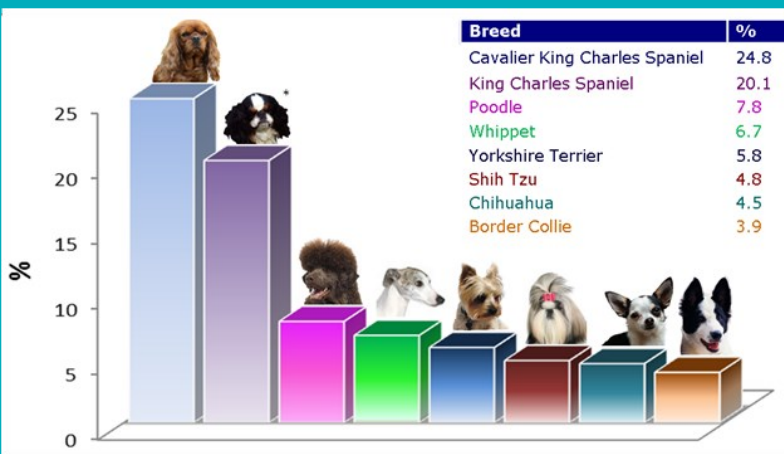
## Characteristics of the 405 *diagnosed* DMVD cases

- Mean age disease first recorded: **9.5 years** (SD 3.2)
- Median recorded weight: **10.9kg** (IQR 8.3-15.8kg)
- **62.2%** were male

## Increased risk of DMVD diagnosis was identified:

- In certain breeds
- In males
- With increasing age
- In insured dogs
- In dogs weighing <20kg

Breed	Odds Ratio	95% CI
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	47.4	(31.6-71.1)
King Charles Spaniel	36.5	(18.9-70.5)
Chihuahua	6.2	(2.9-13.3)
Whippet	4.7	(1.9-11.9)
Poodle	2.9	(1.4-6.2)
Shih Tzu	2.9	(1.5-5.7)
Yorkshire Terrier	2.2	(1.3-3.6)
Border Collie	2.0	(1.1-3.6)



Prevalence of murmurs consistent with DMVD recorded in clinical records of high-risk dog breeds

\*Image courtesy of Diane Pearce Collection / The Kennel Club©

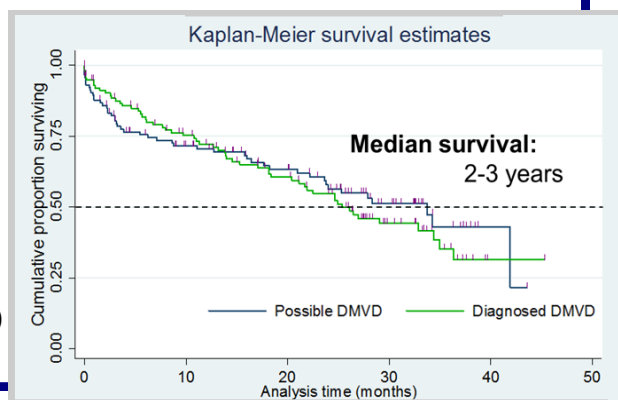
There was no difference in survival (all-cause mortality) between dogs with *diagnosed* and *possible* DMVD.

## Deaths & survival patterns

212 (52.3%) dogs with *diagnosed* DMVD died during the follow-up period (median follow-up: 22 months).

Median survival time following disease detection was **2-3 years**.

Purebred dogs, those weighing  $\geq 20.0$ kg and older dogs had a worse prognosis.



## Contact us!

For further info, project updates and more....

### Postal address:

Royal Veterinary College,  
 Hawkshead Lane,  
 Hatfield,  
 Hertfordshire  
 AL9 7TA

Website: [www.rvc.ac.uk/VetCompass](http://www.rvc.ac.uk/VetCompass)

E-mail address: [vetcompass@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:vetcompass@rvc.ac.uk)

