Prevalence and clinical outcomes of dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) in dogs under first opinion veterinary care in the UK

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OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to identify the prevalence, management and outcomes of dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) in first opinion UK practice.

METHODS

The study was a retrospective VetCompass study analysing a pooled database of first opinion veterinary clinical

data. Inclusion criteria for DCM were any dog with a recorded diagnosis of either DCM or an unspecified cardiomyopathy. The study included all DCM cases recorded between 31/06/12 – 31/12/13. Signalment (breed, age, and sex), management and outcomes were extracted and described.

RESULTS

There were 244 DCM cases identified from a study population of 455,557 dogs, giving an overall prevalence of 0.05% (95% CI: 0.05 – 0.06) with 157 (64%) of the cases being male. The most common breeds were Labrador Retriever (11%), Doberman Pincher (9%) and Boxer (8%). A murmur was not reported in 49% of cases and echocardiography was the most commonly used diagnostic test (48%). Pimobendan (76%) and furosemide (62%) were the most commonly used treatments. Overall, 168 DCM cases died during the study period with 140 (83%) involving euthanasia. DCM was found to be the primary cause of death in 123 (73%) of cases that died.

STATEMENT

These findings on prevalence and severity can help to understand the impact of DCM at a population level to assist welfare prioritisation. The clinical management results can assist practitioners with benchmarking and clinical audit.