Getting under the skin of the Shar Pei using primary-care veterinary clinical records

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OBJECTIVES

The Shar Pei is a breed well known for wrinkled skin that has been associated with ocular, aural, dermatological and systemic disorders. This study aimed to describe the demography, mortality and common disorders in Shar-Pei dogs under veterinary care in the UK

METHODS

The VetCompass database shares clinical records from practices across the UK. For this study, the full clinical records for all Shar Pei dogs under veterinary care during

2013 were examined to extract data on all disorders recorded.

RESULTS

The study included 1913 Shar-Pei (0.4% of all dogs). The median age was 2.7 years (IQR 1.2–5.2). The median adult bodyweight for females was 21.5kg (IQR 19.0–25.0) and males was 24.6kg (IQR 21.9–27.9). The most common specific disorders recorded were entropion (17.9%, 95% CI 16.2–19.7), otitis externa (16.6% 95% CI 14.9–18.3), non-specified ear disorders (6.8%, 95% CI 5.7–8.0) and aggression (4.3%, 95% CI 3.5–5.4).

There were 190 deaths during the study. Longevity of males (6.9 years, IQR 4.4–9.9) was shorter than females (8.0 years, IQR 5.6–10.1). The most common disorder groups for cause of death were neoplasia (15.3%, 95% CI 9.7–22.5), renal disease (9.5%, 95% CI 8.0–20.0) and undesirable behaviour (7.9%, 95% CI 6.3–17.4).

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

These results highlight the substantial disease burden of ocular, aural and behavioral disorders in Shar-Pei dogs. With this solid evidence base, veterinarians can play a greater role in providing guidance to owners and breeders about how to manage these important issues.