questionnaires detailing their dogs' responses to varied situations and experiences, and any canine behaviour(s) they found a problem.

RESULTS

In the questionnaire for 6-month old dogs, owners reported problem behaviours in 199/636 (31.3%) dogs. Of the 199 dogs, help had only been sought for 78 (39.2%); from dog trainers (57/199;28.6%), behaviourists (22/199; 11.1%) and/or vets (9/199;4.5%).

Behaviours most commonly reported as problems were pulling on lead (26/199;13.1%), jumping up at people (22/199;11.1%), mouthing people (22/199;10.1%), and separation-related behaviour (SRB) (unwanted/undesirable behaviour in owner absence) (17/199;8.5%). Elsewhere in the 6-month questionnaire, data were available as to whether 'jumping up at people' and SRB

were displayed. Despite not noting the behaviour as 'a problem', a further 128/621 (20.6%) of dogs were reported to have jumped up at people and 345/619 (55.7%) had shown SRB (≥ 2 signs were considered an accurate indication of SRB). Owners were more likely to report SRB than 'jumping up at people' as a problem, (OR = 4.85, 95% CI 3.77–6.23, $P = <0.0001$).

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

This study highlights behaviour(s) that owners of 6-month old dogs find problematic, thus enabling development of specific training plans to address these problems. Future work will include analysis of risk factors for owner-reporting of specific canine behaviours and assess escalation/resolution of specific behaviours in relation to perception of a problem and help sought.

The referral surgeon-first opinion practitioner interaction is a source of communication breakdown in the surgical care pathway – a review of 112 questionnaire responses from first opinion practitioners

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OBJECTIVES

Communication breakdown in the human healthcare environment has been identified as a source of patient morbidity and mortality. While many clinicians across all clinical veterinary roles employ protocols to ensure effective communication within their own institutions, the referral surgeon-first opinion practitioner interaction has not been previously investigated. The aim of this study

was to identify sources of communication breakdown in the referral surgeon-first opinion practitioner interaction.

METHODS

A 15-question questionnaire was designed to investigate first opinion practitioner attitudes and approaches to performing postoperative examinations on referred surgical cases. The questionnaire was posted on a social media-based veterinary discussion forum (Veterinary Voices UK) inviting anonymous responses from small animal first opinion practitioners who referred at least one surgical case to a referral institution during the previous 12-months. The questionnaire remained open to responses for seven days. Results were presented as descriptive data.

RESULTS

One-hundred and twelve first opinion practitioners responded to the questionnaire. Results reveal that 75.0% and 58.0% of respondents never, rarely or sometimes felt adequately prepared to formulate future care plans in referred surgical cases with and without complications, respectively. In addition 23.2% of respondents never, rarely or sometimes informed referral surgeons of complications and 26.8% of respondents never, rarely or sometimes discussed future management of complications with the referral surgeon.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

Results of this study suggest that the referral surgeon-first opinion practitioner interaction is a source of communication breakdown bilaterally. Referral surgeons and first opinion practitioners should ensure that communication between both parties is sufficient to ensure appropriate continuity of care.