

## Another Corny-But-Interesting Story! (for Greyhound Star)

Are corns in greyhounds hereditary, at least in part? That is not the sort of question I hear every day, which probably goes some way to explain why I am a struggling track vet, who happily leaves it to others to scale the dizzying heights of academia. Like I say it is not every day that you hear of a new project researching aspects of greyhound genetics and it is even less often that you hear of research into greyhound health being carried out in Norway. Thus it was that you could have knocked me over with a feather when I got an e-mail from a colleague in Scandinavia checking to see if I was still involved in greyhound work.

In this he is not alone. Our Esteemed Editor too has voiced his concerns that I might have retired to a home for befuddled veterinarians. Apparently the criteria for admission include 'ranting in a corner while clutching a bottle of "a leading popular brand" of *uisce beatha*. Befuddled I may well be at times, and I admit I have done my fair share of ranting both in corners and in plain sight, but when you are "on call" all day every day you don't get to drink anything more stimulating than coffee or that canned stuff that is supposed to give you wings so my application is on hold for the time being. I digress. There was I checking e-mails while fortifying the inner man - I can multitask on a good day, at least for a wee while - in preparation for the customary eleven-race Saturday night card when his e-mail stopped me in my tracks.

The reason he was asking, it transpired, was because he was collecting saliva samples for a project in collaboration with the professor of medical genetics at the Oslo Vet School. The aim of the project is to perform a genome wide association study to look at whether there is any genetic basis to the development of corns in greyhounds. He asked if I knew of any greyhounds with corns or greyhounds without corns whose owners might be willing to allow a saliva swab to be taken from their dog's mouth. As a card-carrying member of the International Brotherhood of Greyhound Vets, I feel duty bound to try and help and fellow member who asks me nicely. In this case the project is an intriguing one which has fired my imagination.

Although we are talking about a procedure which is quick, non-invasive and entirely painless there are still legal angles involving the collection of samples from animals which are not themselves unwell. In the circumstances therefore the exact nature of the procedure has to be carefully explained to each dog owner and their consent obtained. So that everything is honest and above board, it is suggested that owners who are tempted to join the project should route their expressions of interest through their own veterinary surgeons.

The Norwegian contingent are interested in the possibility of using the good offices of the Society of Greyhound Veterinarians to try and recruit greyhound vets who would be prepared to participate in the research. They say in the past they have typically always had a good response from Irish and British veterinarians which is why they are turning to the U.K. and Ireland once again in search of clinical cases. If you have a dog with a corn and you would be happy to come on board, please ask your own vet to contact the S.G.V. via our website [www.greyhoundvets.co.uk](http://www.greyhoundvets.co.uk). Thank you.

*Michael Watts, Secretary SGV, September 2019*