

Information sheet for referring vets of travelled dogs

In the last few years, the number of dogs diagnosed with *Brucella canis* infection in the UK is increasing. Of those diagnosed, there is a higher proportion of cases in dogs that have come from or travelled to endemic countries, outside of the UK. Clinical signs seen in dogs are:

- Reproductive issues - abortion, epididymitis, orchitis, prostatitis
- Discospondylitis
- Rarely polyarthritis, uveitis, lethargy, pyrexia
- Asymptomatic
- Zoonotic
 - Signs in humans are non-specific and flu-like
 - Transmission is via exposure to bodily fluids especially reproductive fluids but the overall risk is low

Due to the incidence of *Brucella canis* infection in asymptomatic patients in the referral population and number of higher risk procedures performed such as cystocentesis, CSF, joint fluid sampling, spinal and joint surgeries, we are routinely testing our travelled patients that are referred to us.

We will perform rapid, patient-side serology tests in all travelled dogs (that do not have a prior negative result) either at the time of being admitted to the hospital before any investigations. Based on these results, our clinical suspicion, and the stability of the pet we will either:

- Continue management as normal
- Discharge the pet while pending further results
- Hospitalise the pet to provide supportive care while pending further results.

These changes are being made to reduce the risks to other pets, owners and staff. *Brucella* infections are notifiable to the APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency).

How could you help us?

- If you have any clinical suspicion of *Brucella canis* then perform an in-house rapid antigen test or submit serology to the APHA prior to referral
 - Rapid antigen tests (Vet Lab Supplies)
 - Slide agglutination test (SAT) TC1032 and indirect ELISA (iELISA) TC0116
 - These results take 7-21 days
 - Give us a call/email us if you have any further questions
- Educate owners about brucellosis including the increased vigilance with an aim to reduce the risk to other pets, owners and staff.