



RESEARCH USING SAVSNET DATA

DO SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS IMPACT MANAGEMENT OF SUSPECTED CANINE MULTICENTRIC LYMPHOMA IN UK FIRST OPINION PRACTICE?

Full paper published in the Veterinary Record available [here](#)

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LYMPHOMA

Lymphoma is one of the most common tumours of domestic dogs, accounting for 7%-24% of all canine malignant neoplasms, with an incidence rate of 20-100 cases per 100 000 dogs per year.

There is now a great deal of evidence in the human medical literature demonstrating that socioeconomic status is associated with risk of lymphoma, disease management and disease outcome. Patients from deprived areas have a higher risk of developing comorbidities, higher mortality, and, where relevant, increased costs of treatment.

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STUDY

Our primary aim was to investigate whether socioeconomic factors such as deprivation and insurance status were associated with pursuit of diagnosis or treatment options in canine patients presented to first opinion practice with peripheral lymphadenomegaly.

Electronic health records were collected and examined via the SAVSNET database from first opinion practices across the UK, between November 2014 and January 2020.

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CLINICAL APPROACH

From a total of 674 cases, 264 confirmed (ML-C) and 410 suspected (ML-S) cases of multicentric lymphoma were included. Only 4.45% of cases were referred (6.8% of ML-C and 2.9% of ML-S). 60.8% of patients were not insured.

The majority of ML-S cases (62.4%) were treated with monotherapy corticosteroids followed by euthanasia (19.3%) during the initial consultation. Most of the ML-C cases (46.6%) were treated with corticosteroids with the second most common treatment chemotherapy (37.9%).

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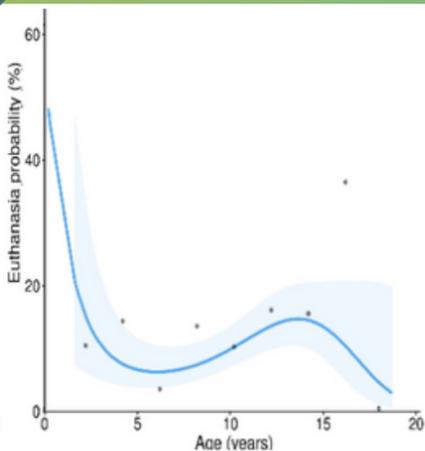


FACTORS AFFECTING APPROACH

Multivariable analyses showed that a definitive diagnosis was made more frequently for dogs whose owners resided in the least deprived regions of England or in insured pets. Additionally the probability of pursuing diagnostics was higher in ages between 4-8 years old.

Insured pets in the ML-C group were less likely to be prescribed corticosteroids than those in the ML-S group. Owners who held pet health insurance were also more likely to opt for chemotherapy than those who did not.

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AGE AND EUTHANASIA

The probability of immediate euthanasia upon suspicion of lymphoma (ML-S and ML-C groups combined) changed with the age of the patient.

The risk was lowest around 5 years of age and then rose towards a peak around 14 years of age.

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MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

This is the first study to evaluate the effects of socio-economic factors on management of canine multicentric lymphoma (ML). As we hypothesised, residence in a lower deprivation area and holding insurance were associated with a higher frequency of choosing a path towards diagnosis or chemotherapy. Whilst these findings are not unexpected, they do suggest that any model considering influences on management choices for canine ML should include these factors.

Thank you to all participating veterinary practices for making this work possible.

“This study highlights the potential of using SAVSNET as an epidemiological tool and suggests that any model considering influences on management choices for canine multicentric lymphoma should include socioeconomic factors like the index of multiple deprivation and insurance status.”

Dr Kostas Rigas

