Letter to the Editor

Phenotypes in golden retriever

Sir,

The commentary by Shelton and Engvall (Neuromusc. Disorders 2009;19:800–1) on Ambrosio et al. [1] are very pertinent and we agree with them. This paper was written and sent to publication without the knowledge of our group at the Human Genome Research Center. Our contribution to this paper was the genotyping of the dogs. The small sample of only 15 dogs included in this manuscript is indeed not representative of the 77 affected dogs born in this kennel to date. As far as we could observe, all dogs received comparable care during the postnatal period or afterwards and therefore the variable phenotype is probably not caused by differences in animal care. However, there are several other important errors in this report, regarding literature citation and interpretation, analysis of the data and even observation of the dogs, as pointed out in our subsequent letter to the Editor of the journal [2]. For example, it is stated in the paper that “no variation in phenotype is seen among affected females”, which is not what we observed. Although the number of affected females born in the kennel is relatively small (n = 13) they have a variable course, comparable to their male litter mates. It is also important to point out that the kennel was established after the donation of Beth, a female GRMD carrier, by the group of Joe Kornegay (University of North Carolina) and contrary to what is stated in the paper, it is not the only GRMD kennel in Latin America. There is another

in the State of São Paulo (Ribeirão Preto) which is very active.

Finally we would like to state that we are no longer collaborating with this group and have established a new independent kennel at the University of São Paulo named GRMD GENOCÃO (“GRMD GENEDOG”). In addition to studies involving preclinical trials with drugs and stem cells from different sources, our group at GENOCÃO will continue to investigate the possible mechanisms responsible for clinical variability, which remains a great challenge.

References


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