

CHOW BREED COUNCIL HEALTH REPORT 2021

Despite Covid making it more difficult to carry out the normal recommended testing, the health committee have still been actively monitoring health and other factors that may have an impact on the breed.

Our on-line reporting scheme has slowed down a little however we have had a small number of owners contacting us to ask for and report health issues. The most commonly reported issues continue to be entropion and cruciate ligament injuries, hip and elbow dysplasia.

BRONZE HEALTH SCHEME

7 dogs submitted forms in 2020. No health concerns were found

5 dogs have submitted forms in 2021 so far and no health concerns found

SILVER HEALTH SCHEME

8 Silver Certificates have been issued in 2021. The certificates are issued if the owner submits eye test results and bronze forms and their hip and elbow scores either from the KC web or scans of the results. There is no pass or fail the results from the tests are listed on the back of the form. This allows us to collect factual data which has shown that it would be advisable to make elbow and hip scoring a mandatory requirement for ALL chows before being bred from.

HIP SCORES

There were no 0 hip scores in 2021, totals ranged from 7 – 56 compared to 0-38 in 2020

ELBOW SCORES

Of the 12 submission 8 had 0 elbows 3 with a score of 3. In 2021 where only 2 of the 8 submissions had 0 score and 5 with a score of 3. The data suggests that ED may be a larger issue than previously thought and that breeders need to be encouraged to elbow score before breeding.

EYE TESTING

Only 1 of the 8 submissions reported Entropion

HEALTH REPORTING FORM DATA

We have received 303 reports since the online reporting scheme started at the end of 2016

- 62% (189) reports were for bitches
- 67% (202) reports said the chow was not bred from
- 63.3% (149) of 229 reported no health issues with their chows (this feature was added later)
- The most commonly reported conditions from 157 responses were 22.3% (35) skeletal 17.8% (28) ocular

- The most commonly reported condition from 30 reports for dermatological conditions were for hypersensitivity (allergy/chronic itching) 63.3% (19)
- 61 responses were received for Muscular-Skeletal Conditions with the majority 41% (25) reporting Cruciate Ligament Injury, 14.8% (9) reporting HD and 13.1% (8) ED
- 42 responses for Ocular Conditions were for entropion 81% (34)

In addition to the established data collection schemes we also monitor social media (facebook) where many owners of non-registered chows discuss health issues. Again the most discussed issue continues to be entropion and cruciate ligament injury, along with hip and elbow problems. Many of these chows appear to be unregistered and/or imports which makes it harder to collect health data for these.

Another issue we are seeing relates to Non Standard Colours particularly chocolate, lilac, and more recently merle and brindle. It has been noted that few of these are registered with the KC. NSC can produce standard colours which are introduced to a breeding programme which may well impact on future generations. We do not have enough data on NSC to ascertain if there are any serious health issues with the exception of merle where blindness and deafness are associated with the patterning. Merle coat patterning does not occur naturally in Chows without outcrossing to a breed that produces Merle.

We continue to work with the Kennel Club health team on several fronts. The KC recently followed up on our concerns regarding Gastric Torsion (bloat) and a good number of chow owners responded to a survey run by Willows Veterinary Team researching the issue in a number of breeds. The KC are well aware of several breeds concerned with the impact that NSC have on the health and wellbeing and are in the process of organising another meeting for the breeds most affected by NSC including the chows.

Overall the chow still seems to be a relatively healthy breed despite the number of complaints being made on social media. The registrations continue to be low although we are aware that far more chows are being bred and imported that are not registered which may account for the increase in reports. Also it must be considered that people that have healthy chows only post lovely pictures not complaints.

The most urgent consideration for breeders remains hips, elbows and eyes.