

IPFD Milestones - December 2020



This year has been challenging for all organizations globally. However, IPFD has fared well. We have always been a 'virtual'-based operation, with all consultants working from home. This milestones document is meant to update our Partners and Sponsors on our activities in 2020. – Dr. Brenda Bonnett, CEO

Message from the Canadian Kennel Club: *“CKC’s membership in the International Partnership for Dogs, and participation in the biennial Dog Health Workshop and the international working group for extremes in conformation has strengthened Canada’s position internationally on critical and strategic issues such as conformation standards development, health strategies and breeding Brachycephalic dogs. Closer to home, it has helped CKC to improved awareness and confidence in CKC with breeders, government and the general public that health and well-being of purebred dogs is top of mind.”*

IPFD Operations

IPFD Board

- ❖ IPFD transitioned in three new Board members, from the USA and Germany. In November, we introduced our newest Board Member, Alexandre Balzer, and thanked Gregoire Leroy for his contributions as he stepped away from the Board. The Board has added new committees to increase its effectiveness. The IPFD Communications and Fundraising Committees held five virtual meetings and will be looking to expand with external members in 2021 to broaden representation. [See Board and Officer profiles.](#)

Team

- ❖ Monique Megens joined as IPFD's first Chief Operating Officer (COO). Her impressive credentials have assisted us in streamlining administrative functions and address growth and sustainability.
- ❖ IPFD CEO Dr. Brenda Bonnett has been named honorary doctor at the Swedish University of Agriculture (SLU) Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Husbandry.
- ❖ Cancelled all planned travel and face-to-face meetings without substantive impact.

Partners and Sponsors

- ❖ In 2019 we had renewed or continued ongoing contracts with all Partners, and in 2020 we have welcomed/are in discussions with several new IPFD Partners/Sponsors, including the [Black Russian Terrier Club of America \(BRTCA\)](#).
- ❖ We continue to develop outreach tactics with our partners, such as IPFD Collaborating Partner, [The World Small Animal Veterinary Association \(WSAVA\)](#). IPFD is submitting a monthly feature, called Meet the Breed, as [a monthly feature in their online news section](#) and [WSAVA Bulletin](#), which highlights IPFD resources on a particular breed with a focus on breed-specific diseases, international health data, and more.

Communications

- ❖ Published [2019 Annual Report: A Growing Voice](#). In our fifth year we continued to effectively advance our mission of enhancing dog health, well-being, and welfare and supporting human-dog interactions.
- ❖ Enhanced messaging and branding for IPFD with new [“About IPFD”](#) section on DogWellNet.com highlighting who we are, what we do, and how and where we work.
- ❖ New plans to increase our visibility in the dog world. For example, WSAVA collaboration, and plans to distribute content for breed clubs and media.
- ❖ Published seven issues of [DogWellNet Digest](#), a newsletter sent to all members, highlighting new content and featuring a spotlight on major current issues, e.g. 'Pandemic Puppies' and Brachycephalic issues.
- ❖ Social Media: expanding reach with more posts and followers on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

Major Initiatives

[DogWellNet.com](#) is the hub for our major initiatives – where the fantastic resources, information and tools are available to all. In 2020, content has expanded with dozens of new articles and blogs, in addition to resources from our major initiatives (below). As all the pieces of the puzzle of dog health and welfare continue to be compiled, we are advancing also in our role to promote the Big Picture... i.e. a truly holistic approach integrating across stakeholders, topics, and regions and bringing the dog world together.

International Dog Health Workshops (IDHWs)

- 🐾 A [report on the 4th IDHW](#) was published in the online journal *Canine Medicine and Genetics*. Actions prioritized at that meeting are underway and outcomes are being realized.
- 🐾 Prioritized in the Extremes theme at the 4th IDHW, the new [International Working Group on Extreme Conformation in Dogs \(IWGECD\)](#) has been enacted. It will facilitate creating and sharing resources across national/ international working groups, experts, and other stakeholders. First focused on challenges with brachycephalic breeds, it will eventually address other issues related to extremes of conformation.
- 🐾 Significant advancement of actions under Genetics (validation of tests, breed relevance reporting, laboratory standards), Breed Health Strategies, and Supply and Demand are ongoing.
- 🐾 There may be a virtual meeting in 2021, and the IDHW in 2022 may be in Canada – stay tuned!

Breeds Database

- 🐾 It continues to expand both in terms of the content and the number of breeds (180 in total). We added seven new breeds ([American Bulldog](#) | [American Akita](#) | [Pembroke Welsh Corgi](#) | [Cardigan Welsh Corgi](#) | [Azawakh](#) | [Field Spaniel](#) | [Frisian Water Dog](#)) and updated many more. A review of content and updates on many other breeds is ongoing. Breed experts and clubs continue to share material, and we are expanding our collaborations. Our breeds material is integral to the new Get a GRIHP! articles (see below).
- 🐾 Our 2020 Breeds of the Month features included links to breed profiles in our [Pedigreed Breeds Database](#) and links to other content on DogWellNet.com, such as [Globally Relevant Integrated Health Profiles \(GRIHPs\)](#), which describe the Big Picture of health on (all) conditions that are of interest within a breed. Breeds on the Month included: [Australian Shepherd](#) | [Saluki](#) | Dachshund ([Miniature](#), [Standard](#)) | [Cardigan Welsh Corgi](#) | [Field Spaniel](#).

Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD)

- 🐾 The [HGTD Database](#) now includes listings for 82 international test providers and 45 actively participating GTPs in 22 countries.
- 🐾 The database includes 346 phenes, with gene and mutations provided, links to research, clinical information, and additional publications. 195 phenes have at least 1 breed-specific reference, with most phenes also having additional breed-specific information on test usage or application in the breed(s).
- 🐾 [Breed Relevance Ratings \(BRR\)](#) support evidence-based usage and application of genetic tests. BRRs are a way to capture current research, and expert opinion on breed-specific tests, as well as many crossbreeds. Canine health specialists, as well as dog owners, can use BRR to more easily identify tests that may be important to consider in health and breeding decisions.
- 🐾 Complimentary to BRR, the information gathered in producing BRRs has added significantly to our phene database, providing more breed-specific research links, contributions from Breed Clubs, researcher commentary, and test application recommendations.
- 🐾 Despite only launching this year, more than half of the almost 2000 breed-specific phenes have been assessed for a Breed Relevance Rating. This represents hundreds of hours searching and reviewing research papers, liaising with international researchers and experts, and cross-referencing with external research groups and databases. Significant contributions for review and inclusion have come from breed experts representing years of experience as breed health liaisons, health advocates, and breed clubs and councils.
- 🐾 Breed-specific genetic testing information is being integrated into Get a GRIHP! developments.
- 🐾 A 3-tiered system for commercial participant has been revised: Sponsors, Supporters, and Participants. We are having good response to our annual request for donations from the test providers.
- 🐾 This year also saw a major change in our HGTD page display, showing not only all breed-specific tests, but also tests available to all dogs, in one easy search. For those breeds who do not currently have any breed-specific tests available, they are linked to closely associated breed options. Four major database reviews were undertaken to improve and update gene and mutation information, links to our research collaborators and peer-reviewed publications, and to accommodate the expanding breed-specific information.
- 🐾 Twelve entries in the new [HGTD & Genetic Testing blog](#), providing regular updates on our expanding genetic testing resources.

Bringing it all together: Let's Get a GRIHP!

Dog problems are complex and require a multi-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder approach. The pieces of the health puzzle are addressed by: breed clubs identifying conditions of interest in their breed, kennel club recommendations/requirements, researchers studying disease and population statistics, genetic test providers' offerings, national population stats - and all this must be integrated. Use and interpretation of genetic tests, e.g. needs to be balanced with other disease risks and health and welfare concerns. Veterinarians, owners, breeders, and health advisors need tools to help them pull it all together.

IPFD's answer is to Get a GRIHP! - a Globally Relevant Integrated Health Profile. IPFD is creating a series of articles on the Big Picture of health and welfare within breeds as resources for veterinarians, owners, caretakers, breeders and others who want to understand the key issues for individual dogs and breed populations, internationally; under the '[Get a GRIHP!](#)' initiative. Creating the GRIHP profiles involved not only working with our existing resources (Agria data files and RAS/JTO) but included consultation with breed specialist collaborators as well as collection of data available via IPFD Partner's tools and resources. Use of KC tools from several countries allowed us to create a more 'global' view of breed-specific health profiles.

- ✿ Since their introduction in August of 2020, there are now five breeds ([Welsh Corgis](#) | [Dachshunds](#) | [French Bulldogs](#) | [Australian Shepherds](#) | [Salukis](#)) with GRIHPs on DogWellNet.com.
- ✿ GRIHPs are referenced in our [WSAVA Meet the Breed features](#).
- ✿ IPFD contributor Ian J. Seath published an [article focusing on IPFD's Get a GRIHP! on Breed Health Initiative](#) in Our Dogs and his [Sunsong Dachshunds blog](#).
- ✿ With support from Morris Animal Foundation, we are preparing a Get GRIHP! package for Golden Retrievers.

Ultimately, we are working to establish the Health Strategies Database for Dogs (HSSD) that will be an interactive resource of health strategy information from many stakeholders and collaborators. Structured similarly to the HGTD, but with information on all conditions of interest in a breed.

Reframing Current Challenges Around Pedigree Dogs

- ✿ IPFD published an article entitled: [Reframing Current Challenges Around Pedigree Dogs: A Call for Respectful Dialogue, Collaboration and Collective Actions](#). Our aim is to encourage open and respectful dialogue, collective and collaborative actions, and a global perspective on issues affecting the health and welfare of dogs, including the impact of human dog interactions, the culture of dogs, legislative approaches, and emerging challenges.
- ✿ Brenda Bonnett has participated in several online events to encourage further discussion, including a [webinar hosted by the All-party Parliamentary Dog Advisory Welfare Group \(APDAWG\)](#) on 1 December.
- ✿ We've compiled [a list of media stories and articles posted by IPFD Partners and other contributors](#) helping to spread the word on IPFD's Call for Collective Actions for Health and Welfare of Pedigree Dogs.

IPFD – into 2021

Controversies and challenges to dogs internationally continue to underline the need for broad-based collaboration and the impartial voice of IPFD. Initially we were concerned about impact on our Partners due to COVID-19 and associated challenges; however, it seems that with increased dog registrations in 2020, our funding base from most of our existing kennel club partners, e.g., will be stable. And yet, our big ideas need further support. In 2021, we will step up our outreach to enlist new supporters and secure additional revenue through enhanced fundraising efforts. Watch for our 2020 Annual Report early in the new year.

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