

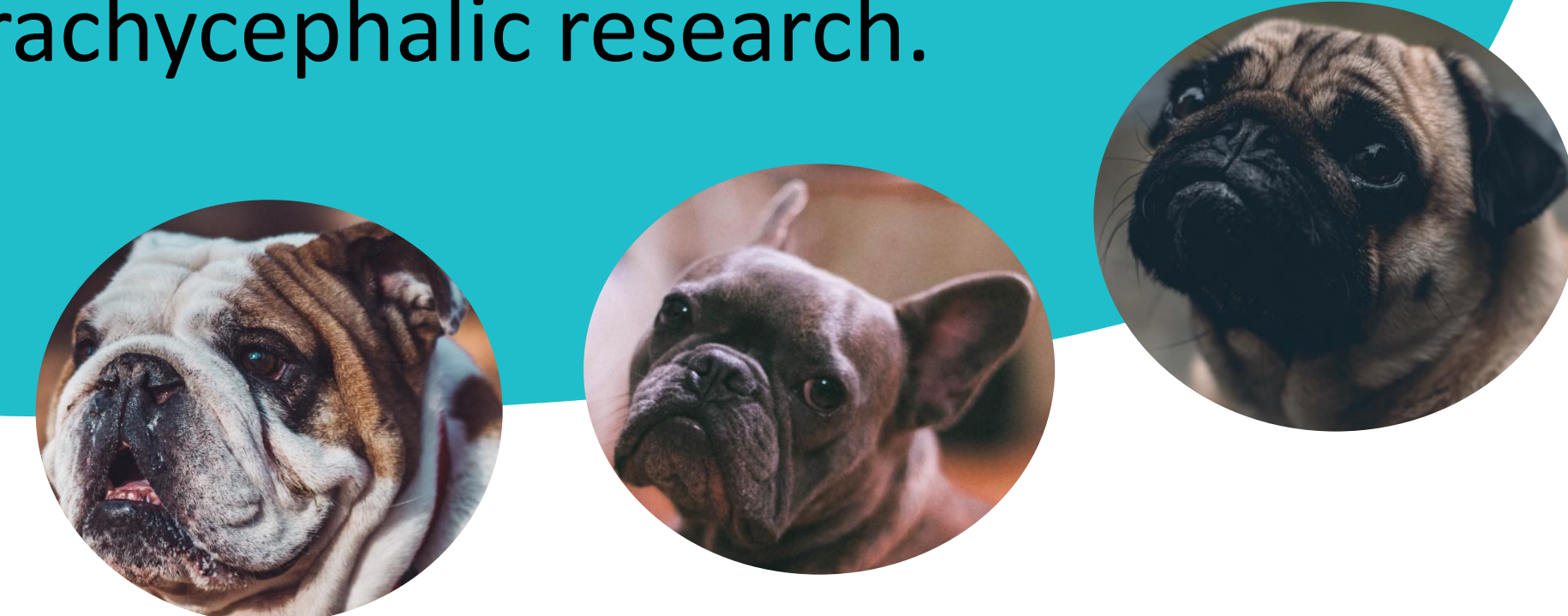
Background

Brachycephalic (short-muzzled, flat-faced) dog breeds, such as the Bulldog, French Bulldog and Pug, have become increasingly common in the UK and worldwide over the past decade. Issues around this population explosion and the direct health problems associated with these breeds are a major welfare concern for dogs at a population level. These issues need focussed actions to reduce the welfare impact relating to brachycephalic dogs.

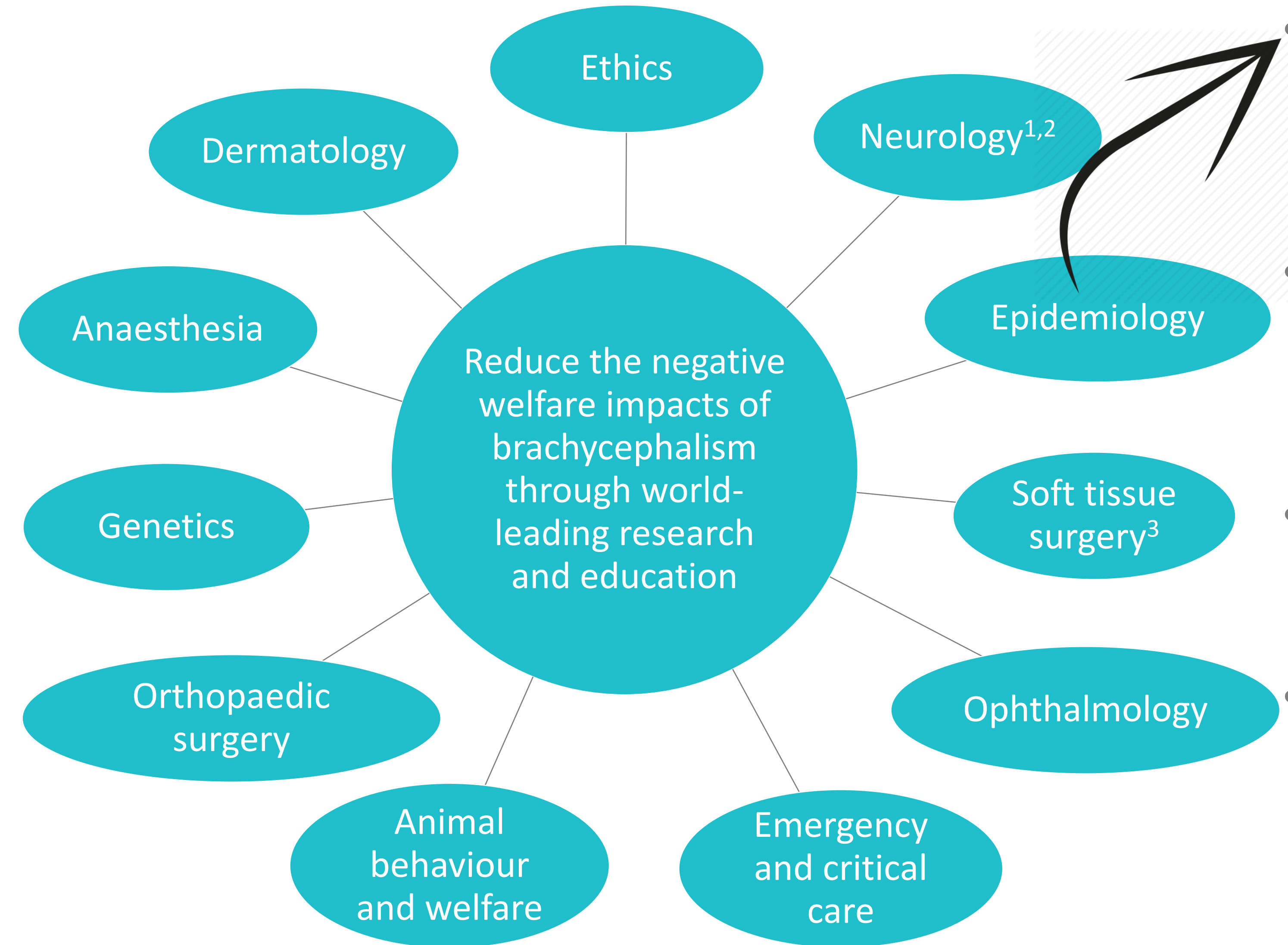


What is RVC doing?

RVC has formed the “Brachycephalic Research Team” that brings together experts from a range of disciplines to generate high quality and focussed brachycephalic research.



The RVC Collaboration: Brachycephalic Research Team



Epidemiology

- RVC has developed world-leading expertise in companion animal epidemiology with the development of the **VetCompass™** Programme of research.
- VetCompass™** curates the world's largest university-based database of veterinary clinical records for companion animal research.
- VetCompass™** holds data on over 15 million UK animals and has over 50 peer-reviewed publications.
- The **VetCompass™** ethos is to harness the cumulative experience of veterinary teams to generate reliable evidence that can improve companion animal welfare.



The Queen Mother Hospital for Animals (QMHA)

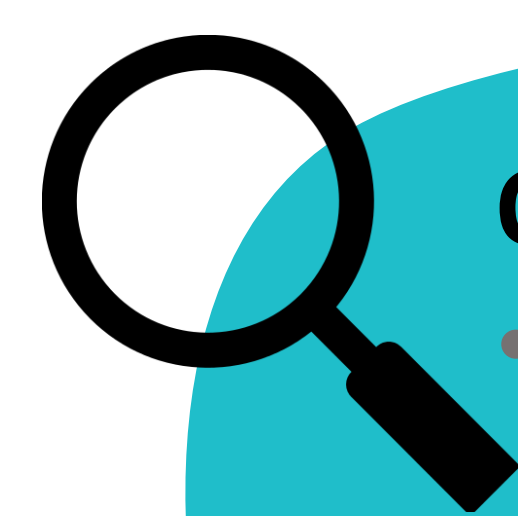
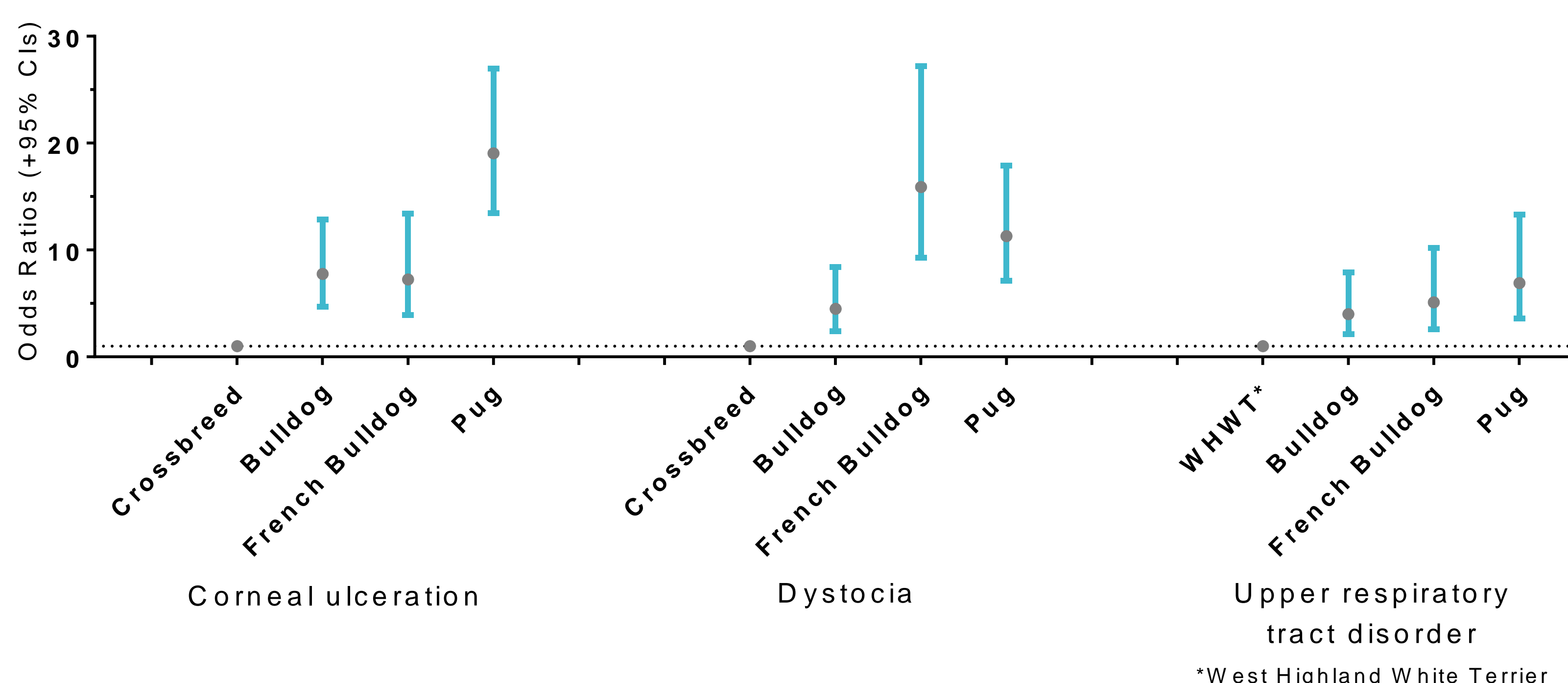
The QMHA at the RVC is the largest referral hospital in Europe and launched the first brachycephalic clinic in July 2014.

Brachycephalic Working Group (BWG)

- BWG is a national UK body comprised of major stakeholders with a primary focus on brachycephalic welfare. The RVC Brachycephalic Research Team actively collaborates with BWG.

VetCompass™ Results

Brachycephalic breed risks for common disorders⁴⁻⁶



Other VetCompass™ data:

- Sharply rising numbers of French Bulldogs⁷ and Pugs⁸ with a more gradual ascent for Bulldogs in the wider UK dog population.
- Distinctly different distribution of common diseases in the French Bulldog⁷, Pug⁸ and Bulldog compared with disease patterns of the overall dog population.

Conclusions

‘Collaboration’ and ‘Focus’ are the magic ingredients needed to translate effort and good intentions into positive and meaningful change. Such change should be based on a solid evidence base. Groups such as the RVC Brachycephalic Research Team and the UK Brachycephalic Working Group supported by evidence from data resources such as VetCompass™ can have real impact on brachycephalic welfare.

References

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