

Animal Cancer European Expert Group

Experts to work on improving pet cancer diagnosis and treatment in Europe



From left to right: Malcolm Brearley (President of the ESVONC, special guest of the first ACEE meeting), together with ACEE experts, David Argyle (Chairman), Johannes Hirschberger, Johan de Vos, Sue Murphy, Paulo Buracco, Laura Blackwood, Frédérique Ponce, Pauline de Fornel, Josep Pastor (Absent: Martin Kessler).

The first meeting of the Animal Cancer European Expert group (ACEE) took place on March 26th 2009, in Visegrád, near Budapest (Hungary). The ACEE was founded to **“build and develop best practices in the management of pet cancer, including all therapeutic options, and advancing the recognition of the benefits to the patients, pet owners and veterinary professionals of early and adequate cancer diagnosis and treatment”**.

The ACEE members consist of ten internationally recognised independent experts in the field of companion animal oncology, from six different European countries.

The main objective of the new ACEE group is to provide guidelines to help veterinarians in the diagnosis, treatment and management of pet cancer cases, in harmony with the preservation of the patient's quality of life. Cats and dogs are living longer, which means that the prevalence of cancer is increasing. Estimates indicate that one in four dogs and one in six cats will develop a tumour during their lives and almost half of all dogs over ten years of age will die of cancer-related problems. The treatment of cancer in animals is based on three main techniques: surgery, radiotherapy and

medication (chemotherapy). Major advances in these techniques have improved treatment success over the years.

Pfizer Animal Health offers logistical support to the ACEE group. **“Oncology is an emerging market in veterinary medicine but I am convinced it will become a major field of interest as it has in human medicine. This is why Pfizer, an innovative company, has decided to introduce exciting new drugs in this field”**, stressed Olivier Frank, European Marketing Manager at Pfizer Animal Health. **“Working closely together both with veterinarians in the field and with experts is crucial to deliver products and services that fit current and future veterinary needs. It is therefore an exciting opportunity for us to support the ACEE group financially and logistically. The creation of such a group of European independent experts in veterinary oncology all sharing their knowledge of this growing discipline will clearly benefit the entire veterinary community.”**

As a first step, the ACEE experts will work on guidelines for the diagnostic approach to suspected mast cell tumours, to help practitioners improve detection and treatment of these very common but often problematic tumours.

The ACEE group

The ACEE group consists of ten experts from six different European countries:

- **David Argyle**, Chairman, is William Dick Chair of Veterinary Clinical Studies at the Royal School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh, UK.
- **Laura Blackwood** is Senior Lecturer in Small Animal Oncology at the Faculty of Veterinary Science and the Small Animal Hospital of the Liverpool University, UK.
- **Paolo Buracco** is Professor in Veterinary Surgery (oncology, soft tissue and thoracic surgery) at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Torino, Italy.
- **Pauline de Fornel** is Lecturer at Alfort Veterinary School and private practitioner at the Veterinary Oncology Referral Center (CCV) of Maisons-Alfort, France.
- **Johan de Vos** is a private practitioner at the Clinic for Companion Animals and Veterinary Oncology Referral Centre “De Ottenhorst” in Terneuzen, the Netherlands.
- **Johannes Hirschberger** is Professor of Internal Medicine and Head of the Oncology Service at the Clinic of Small Animal Medicine of München University, Germany.
- **Martin Kessler** is a private practitioner at Hofheim Veterinary Hospital, specialising in oncology, and Lecturer in Clinical Oncology at the Veterinary Faculty of Giessen, Germany.
- **Sue Murphy** is Head of the Oncology Unit at the independent charity “Animal Health Trust” in Kentford, UK.
- **Josep Pastor** is Professor of Pathology and Medicine at the Veterinary Faculty of the University of Barcelona, Spain.
- **Frédérique Ponce** is Assistant Professor in Internal Medicine and Oncology at the Lyon Veterinary School, France.



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