

## Consent Form for Heart Post-mortem

Please accept our sincere condolences for the loss of your puppy. If you are struggling with your loss, please consider visiting the Blue Cross website which offers pet bereavement support.

We are a team of veterinary cardiologists based in the UK and are conducting a study that looks at the presence of undiagnosed congenital ('born with') heart disease in young puppies who die before 4-weeks of age. The reason we are interested is that currently there is no information on heart disease in these very young dogs. If it was a significant cause of death, it may help us to reduce occurrence in the future by identifying strategies to prevent it. The way we plan to diagnose heart disease in such small patients is to image their hearts in a 'micro-CT' scanner. With your consent, we can offer you a free-of-charge heart post-mortem for your puppy.

To conduct a heart post-mortem we would ask that your vet removes both the heart and lungs from your puppy and fix them in a chemical preservative. The heart will then be couriered onto us. Here, we will inspect the outside of your puppy's heart, and subsequently send it onto Great Ormond Street Institute for Child Health for a micro-CT scan to be performed. We will not receive your name or contact details from your vet but will ask to be informed of your puppy's breed, sex, and age at which they passed. Sadly, we will be unable to return the specimen to you (due to health and safety legislation regarding the chemical fixation required). Unless you request otherwise, your puppy's heart will remain in laboratory storage for up to five-years, after which it will be destroyed. Your vets will retain the puppy's body, and you can make decisions with your vet about home burial or cremation as normal. We will of course be happy to send the full heart post-mortem report on to you, via your local vet practice, when it becomes available.

By signing below, you give consent for your vet to remove the heart and lungs from your puppy, and for a heart post-mortem (as detailed above) to be completed.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

For use by primary vet practice only:

**Study ID number assigned by investigators**

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