

# Fibrosis Across Species Workshop Report

By Bebe Pinter



The Westie Foundation of America, Inc. (WFA) is delighted to report that the Fibrosis Across Species Workshop on April 27-29, 2014, joined clinician investigators, researchers, veterinary doctors, pathologists, geneticists, and community advocates to discuss the state of knowledge in lung fibrosis in humans and domestic animals. Approximately 25 medical doctors and 22 veterinarians, many PhD researchers, attended. The WFA provided continuing education credits to veterinarians attending. A summary of the proceedings by Jess Roman, MD follows.

Jesse Roman, MD (University of Kentucky) and Kevin Brown, MD (National Jewish Health) served as co-chairs of the workshop. Amy Olson, MD (Assistant Professor of Medicine, National Jewish Health) and Patricia Olsen, DVM, PhD provided an overview of integrating animal and human medical research – optimizing discovery to advance health in all.

Dr. Olsen then discussed the clinical presentation and evaluation of patients with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF), and Brendan Corcoran, Bachelors in Veterinary Medicine, PhD (Professor, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and U.K.) and Cecile Clercx, DVM, PhD (University of Liege, Belgium) discussed the same in domestic animals.

Dr. Brown talked about the treatment of IPF and the many trials conducted in this area, while Stephan Carey, DVM (Assistant Professor, Small Animal Internal Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, Michigan State University) discussed the same topic as it relates to domestic animals.

Andrew Tager, MD (Co-Director, Interstitial Lung Disease Program, Massachusetts General Hospital and Associate Professor, Harvard Medical School) gave an informative state-of-the-art presentation on the cellular and molecular

mechanisms of lung fibrosis. Kurt Williams, DVM, PhD (College of Veterinary Medicine, Michigan State) and Mostafa Fraig, MD (Professor of Pathology and Pulmonary Medicine, Vice Chair and Director of Anatomy Pathology, University of Louisville) summarized the pathology of fibrosing lung disorders in humans and domestic animals.

David Lynch, MD (Professor, Office of Academic Affairs, Division of Radiology, National Jewish Health) and Carol Reinero, DVM, PhD (Associate Professor Small Animal Internal Medicine, University of Missouri) discussed diagnostic tools with a focus on CT scans and Pulmonary Function Tests in humans and domestic animals.

David Schwartz, MD (University of Colorado) discussed the genetics of IPF, while Kari Ekenstedt, DVM, PhD (Assistant Professor, Department of Animal Science, University of Wisconsin) delivered a great presentation on the genetics of related disorders in animals (particularly dogs).

Mauricio Rojas, MD (Assistant Professor, University of Pittsburgh), Steve Dow, DVM, PhD (Colorado State University), and Richard Vulliet, DVM, PhD (University of California Davis) discussed the prospect of stem cell therapy in fibrosing lung disorders and presented data in dogs.

The presenters and participants (many not included in the list above such as Peter Bitterman, MD (University of Minnesota), Mitch Olman (National Jewish Health), Eric White, MD (University of Michigan), Dennis Doherty, MD, FCCP (University of Kentucky), Clay Marsh, MD (Ohio State), Ana Mora, MD (University of Pittsburgh), Imre Noth, MD (University of Chicago) and others from the veterinary side represent experts in lung fibrosis in humans and domestic animals from the U.S. and Europe.

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After the presentations, the group divided into five working groups to address the implementation of the recommendations of the original document, including the creation of a registry and biorepository, as well as the use of domestic animals as natural models of lung fibrosing disease. The five working groups are as follows: Group I Descriptive studies, Group II Pathogenesis (e.g., etiology, genetics), Group III Anatomy and cellular differences-reagents and models needed, Group IV Establishment of consortium and central repository and Group V Infection in the development of fibrosing lung disease.

Court reporters were in all sessions. The results of these discussions will be incorporated into a comprehensive document for publication.

It should be highlighted that the meeting was so successful that the group voted to create the Lung Fibrosis Across Species Consortium, an international consortium charged with increasing awareness about these disorders, while accelerating discovery through projects that emphasize comparative biology. We are delighted with the momentum created by the workshop and will keep you updated on future developments.

The meeting would have not been possible without the support of the WFA Board of Directors, corporate sponsors (Biogen Idec, Inc., Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Genentech, Inc., and InterMune, Inc.); non-profit sponsors (Coalition for Pulmonary Fibrosis, Hermansky-Pudlak Syndrome Network, Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation, and WFA); breed affiliated club sponsors (West Highland White Terrier Club of America and West Highland White Terrier Club of Southeast Texas); research/education sponsors (University of Louisville, University of Louisville Equine Center); and individual sponsors (Lindy Barrow, William Fisher, Wayne Kompare, Roberta Mocabee, Allison Platt, Shamrock Westie Family, Suburbia North Animal Hospital, and Linda Wible).

In all aspects of planning and at the workshop, the WFA Board of Directors was represented by Bebe Pinter, President; Teresa Barnes, VP Communications and Kay McGuire, DVM, VP Health; also involved in meeting logistics and workshop involvement were Gary Sackett, Treasurer; and Ann Marie Hollowathy, Director, Valerie Fadok, DVM, PhD., Director. The WFA Advisory Council was represented by Wayne Kompare, Past President; Mahmoud Loghman-Adham, MD, PhD; and Pam Whiting, DVM.