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Successful Treatment of Canine Brain Tumor Offers Hope to Humans

Patient of Bush Veterinary Neurology Service~~s~~
shows remarkable response to glioma treatment as part of NIH-funded clinical trial

ROCKVILLE, MD., October 18, 2017 —"Q" Bentley, a canine patient of Bush Veterinary Neurology Service~~s~~ (BVNS), has had a remarkable response to treatment of a glioma brain tumor. The treatment was performed through a clinical trial at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech, funded by the National Institutes of Health.

The trial seeks to determine the safety of a new chemotherapeutic drug and drug delivery method for treating brain tumors in dogs. Since her enrollment, Q's tumor has shrunk by more than 75 percent. Without treatment, the average survival of a dog with a glioma is two and a half months.

"Dogs get the same types of brain tumors as humans, and canine brains are a better model to study because they're more similar to the human brain than those of rats, which are often used in research," says veterinary neurologist William Bush, VMD, DACVIM (Neurology), founder of BVNS.

"Q's response to treatment offers tremendous hope not only for dogs but also for people with this type of cancer," he adds. Dr. Bush also notes, "Q and other dogs in this collaborative trial are helping us give new meaning to canines' designation as 'man's best friend.'"

In fact, the findings of this study will likely be transferrable to future human trials, according to Dr. John Rossmeisl, professor of neurology and neurosurgery in the Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences and principal investigator of the Virginia Tech study.

Q's access to the current trial was made possible by the Collaborative Research Network, which enables specialty veterinary practices in Virginia and Maryland to partner with researchers at the university. When a practice that is a member of the network, such as BVNS, identifies a mass that looks like a glioma, they connect pet owners with relevant clinical trials happening at the veterinary school.

Dr. Bush urges dog owners to be vigilant in identifying brain tumor and other neurologic disease symptoms, which can include:

- Behavioral changes
- Seizures
- Head tilt
- Tremor
- Loss of balance
- Incontinence
- Confusion
- Impaired vision/blindness

"If these symptoms present, it's important to get your dog to your primary care veterinarian for a preliminary workup as soon as possible," advises Dr. Bush. "Then, be sure to get a referral to a board-certified veterinary neurologist who can make a precise diagnosis and offer treatment options—including clinical trials like this one at Virginia Tech."

"There *is* hope," he adds "And we are excited for what the future brings for dogs ***and*** people."

ABOUT BVNS

Bush Veterinary Neurology Service provides comprehensive and compassionate veterinary care for pets with neurologic diseases. Each of the five BVNS neurology centers is located in state-of-the-art referral hospitals with sophisticated neurosurgery suites and onsite diagnostic capabilities, including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and computed tomography (CT). With three practices in Virginia, one in Maryland, and one in Georgia, BVNS is the largest and most progressive veterinary neurology practice in the nation. For additional information, contact Christine Stafford, chief executive officer, at 214.909.5902 / cstafford@bvns.net or visit bvns.net.

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