Canine Cognitive Dysfunction, what is it and how can you recognise it?

Canine Cognitive Dysfunction Syndrome (CDS), also known as doggy dementia, is a condition that affects older dogs and is similar to Alzheimer's disease in humans. As our beloved furry companions age, their cognitive abilities may decline, leading to changes in behaviour and over all well-being. It's essential for pet owners to be aware of the signs of CDS so they can provide the best care for their aging dogs.

Symptoms of CDS can include disorientation, changes in sleep patterns, decreased interest in activities, and altered behaviour. If you notice any of these signs in your senior dog, it's crucial to have a consultation with a vet to have a proper diagnosis and treatment plan. A really useful tool to measure your dog's cognitive function is the Purina CDS scale linked below: https://www.purinainstitute.com/sites/default/files/2021-04/DISHAA-Assessment-Tool.pdf
It is really helpful, as veterinarians for an owner to have completed the CDS tool above before coming to consultation as we can tailor our treatment more accordingly.

While there is no cure for CDS, there are ways to manage the condition and improve your dog's quality of life. We may recommend specific medications, diet changes, supplements or even environmental modifications to help support your dog's cognitive health.

In addition to veterinary care, there are things you can do at home to help your dog with CDS. Providing mental stimulation through interactive toys, puzzles and training exercises can help keep your dog's mind active. Maintaining a consistent routine, ensuring regular exercise, and feeding a balanced diet can also contribute to your dog's overall well-being.

Remember, dogs with CDS need a little extra love and support as they navigate this stage of life. By staying attentive to your dog's needs, chatting to us veterinarians for guidance, and providing a nurturing environment, you can help your furry friend live a comfortable and fulfilling life in their golden years. We are here for further information and support to help guide you, so please reach out to us if you have any concerns about your dog's cognitive health. Together, we can ensure that our senior dogs receive the care and attention they deserve as they age gracefully.