History of Dutch Hand Society by 2019

The first formal hand surgery meeting held in the Netherlands was in 1966, when the Dutch and Belgian Associations for Plastic Surgery hosted the International Conference on Surgery of the Hand. From that, the enthusiasm was born to found the ‘Dutch Club for Surgery of the Hand’. Initiated by Jacques van der Meulen and Johan Landsmeer, several plastic surgeons joined the club to share their knowledge at the annual meetings that were held. International cooperation was quickly found and in 1970 a joint meeting of the Dutch Club for Surgery of the Hand with the ASSH was organized.

In 1972, The Dutch Club decided to become the more formal Society for Surgery of the hand (Nederlandse Vereniging voor Handchirurgie; NVvH), as we know it ever since.

The Dutch Society became a member of the IFSSH in 1975, during the Paris meeting, and the Netherlands hosted the IFSSH Congress in 1980. From then on, the Dutch Society for Surgery of the Hand gradually became the platform where Dutch hand surgeons could discuss cases, and share their scientific efforts.

NVvH was one of the 8 founders of FESSH in 1990 and delegated Steven Hovius for FESSH president between 1999-2002.

Nowadays, two scientific meetings are organized every year. Every two or three years, meetings are combined with the Dutch Society for Hand Therapy and the Belgian Society. The Dutch Society is still growing gradually; currently it has 261 members. It was mainly a domain for plastic surgeons at first, currently a vast number of orthopaedic surgeons and trauma surgeons with a special interest in hand surgery become member. Cooperation and shared enthusiasm for hand surgery remain to be the principle on which the society thrives.

Besides the meetings, the Society supports PhD theses and travel grants. Examiners of the EBHS/FESSH exam support a trial-exam every year in the Netherlands.

After a successful 2002 FESSH conference in Amsterdam, the Dutch Society is proud that the annual FESSH Meeting returns to the Netherlands (Rotterdam) in 2021.