

Singapore

37 CHAPTER



SINGAPORE SOCIETY
FOR HAND SURGERY

Founded 1982

Robert WH Pho



Early Development of Hand Surgery in Singapore from 1952 to 1975

The Hand Surgery service had always been an integral part of orthopaedic surgery (established in 1952) in Singapore General Hospital at Outram Road. The program manages emergency hand trauma from firecrackers, injuries from home and cottage industries, leprosy and paralysis from poliomyelitis, etc. Drs Yeoh Khean Hong, N. Balachandran, Pesi B. Chacha, and Kanwaljit Soin were among surgeons who demonstrated early interest in the specialty. As Singapore become industrialized, high incidences from severe hand injuries required more specialized care. Dedicated Hand clinics were first established in 1974 in University Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at Singapore General Hospital.

Hand Surgery in Singapore 1975 to 1985

A strong foundation in hand surgery was established during this period through many developments and advancements in this field in Singapore:

1. Wide interest and application of microsurgery in Singapore.
2. Successful organization of first and second advanced hand Surgery courses in 1981 and 1982 supported by NUS postgraduate medical school and Academy of Medicine.
3. Formation of Singapore Society for Hand Surgery in 1982.
4. Establishment of Experimental Surgical Unit at Singapore General Hospital in 1984.
5. Establishment of HMDP Visiting Experts in Hand Surgery by Ministry of Health in 1984.
6. Establishment of Hand Surgery Unit by Ministry of Health at Singapore General Hospital in January 1985.
7. Establishment of Department of Hand and Reconstructive Microsurgery at National University Hospital in 1990.
8. Establishment of Advanced Hand Surgery Training Programme which is dedicated to train young surgeons in the specialty of Hand Surgery and local trainees to be trained overseas.

Singapore Society for Surgery of the Hand Surgery

The Society was formed in 1982 by an interested group of orthopaedic surgeons and plastic surgeons. The elected office bearers were: President: Robert WH Pho; Vice-President: Lee Soon Teik; Secretary; Tan Ser Kiat; Treasurer: Tay Chong Kam. The Society was able to establish a common focus of exchanging ideas and experiences with emphasis on training, educa-

tion, research and development of the specialty with the international communities and leading institutes. Among members include associate members of Hand therapists. At its early development the society was able to attract the brightest and very capable leaders in orthopaedic and plastic surgeons to lead the society: Tan Ser Kiat, Kanwaljit Soin, Tan Kok Chai, Low Yin Peng, Low Cheng Ooi, Rexon Ngim, Fong Poh Him, Foo Chee Liam., Yeap Choong Lien, VP Kumar, and Winston Chew.

As the specialty evolves, we have committed groups of very outstanding leaders who dedicate themselves totally to the specialty of Hand Surgery, and hold high offices in the Society. Their unflinching contributions and total commitment have made a great impact in the advancement of Hand Surgery in Singapore and internationally. Among these are Teoh Lam Chuan, Kour Anam Kuch, Lim Beng Hai, Yong Fok Chuan, Tan Soo Heong, Aymeric Lim, Looi Kok Poh, Agnes Tan, Peng Yeong Pin, and Andrew Chin.

The Society organizes an annual Hand Review Course which is an integral part of the Hand Surgery training programmes. The Society works closely with the two main training institutes of Department of Hand Surgery at Singapore General Hospital and Department of Hand and Reconstructive Microsurgery at National University Hospital in providing a national advanced Hand Surgery training programme and an international Hand Fellowship in Hand Surgery.

Reference

- Early history of surgical specialties in Singapore
- Hand Surgery
R.W.H. Pho; B. P. Pereira
Annals, Academy of Medicine
1992, Vo121; No. 3; page 191-197