

EHRA Newsletter

Working Group of The Moment – Netherlands

- National Cardiac Society: Netherlands Society of Cardiology (*Nederlandse Vereniging Voor Cardiologie: NVVC*)
- Logo of the National Society:



- Date: December 2025

National Cardiac Society Overview

- Founded: 1934.
- Total members: \pm 2000, including around 1400 cardiologists and cardiologists in training.
- Organizational structure: The NVVC has a board, a supervisory board, 5 committees (Quality, Advocacy, Science and innovation, Education and Connect), 17 working groups, 2 project groups, 2 task forces and 3 chambers for allied professionals.
- National reach and mission/vision: 'To facilitate high value cardiovascular care by high quality health care professionals dedicated to patients and the society'.

Introduction to the featured working group

- Name of working group: Netherlands Heart Rhythm Association (NHRA).
- Year of establishment: 2008. Logo:  | **NHRA** Netherlands Heart Rhythm Association
- Specific areas of focus: devices and ablation
- Current leadership:
 - Chair: Dr. Pieter G. Postema, MD, PhD
 - Secretary: Dr. Jonas S.S.G. de Jong, MD, PhD
 - Board members: Dr. Lieselot van Erven, MD, PhD. Dr. Giovanni Tahapary, MD. Dr. Carine F.B. Van Huls Van Taxis, MD, PhD
- Number of active members: 170

Key objectives

- Build strong partnerships and actively contribute to decision-making processes in the organization of arrhythmia care in the Netherlands.
- Representation of the Dutch cardiologists who work in the field of arrhythmia.
- Training and education, quality assurance, research, innovation and advocacy, both on a national level as well as an international level through EHRA.

Notable events

- Our annual NHRA congress offers a varied program on arrhythmia topics. The NHRA congress audience exists of Dutch arrhythmia experts, fellows, general cardiologists, PhD-students and allied professionals, totalling over 170 attendants yearly including an international keynote speaker. One of the highlights of the meeting is the 'Bert Thalen lecture' accompanied by the Bert Thalen medal. Bert Thalen was one of the pioneers in pacemaker therapy. This honorary lecture is, since 2009, given by colleagues with great achievements in the Dutch field of arrhythmia care.

Bert Thalen medal laureates:

2009: Prof. dr. Hein J.J. Wellens
2010: Dr. Berry L.M van Gelder
2011: Prof. dr. Norbert M. van Hemel
2012: Prof. dr. Chiel M. Janse
2013: Prof. dr. Richard N.W. Hauer
2014: Dr. Willem G. de Voogt
2015: Prof. dr. Luc J.L.M. Jordaens
2016: Prof. dr. Isabelle C. van Gelder
2017: Prof. dr. Harry J.G.M. Crijns
2018: Prof. dr. ir. Jacques M.T. de Bakker
2019: Prof. dr. Jan G. van Dijk
2021: Prof. dr. Arthur A.M. Wilde
2022: Prof. dr. Ton P. Gorgels
2025: Dr. Frank Bracke



Recent Activities & Achievements

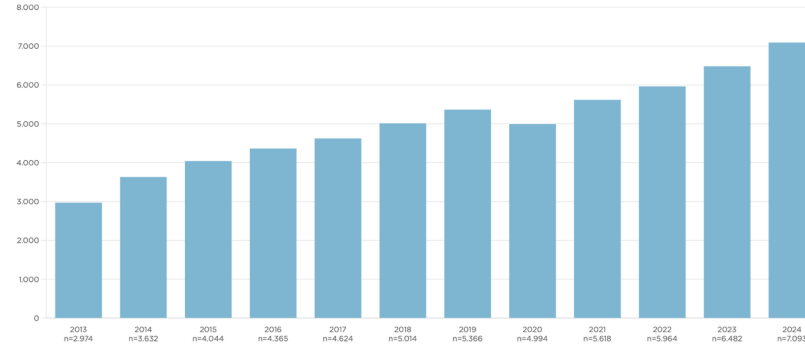
- Contribution to scientific progress has been part of the DNA of the Dutch electrophysiological community, even before its original inception, with endeavors of, e.g., Willem Einthoven (1860-1927), Karel Wenckebach (1864-1940), Dirk Durrer (1918-1984) and Hein Wellens (1935-2020). In the past decades, Dutch electrophysiologists and researchers have further explored pathophysiological arrhythmia mechanisms, diagnoses and treatments for patients with (risk of) arrhythmia in strong national and international collaborations, mirrored by contributions to European leadership, guidelines and advocacy.

Facts and Figures

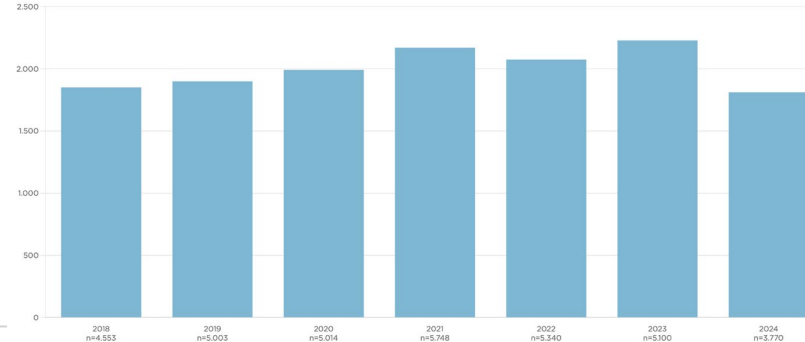
Invasive EP procedures in the Netherlands are strictly regulated to white-listed hospitals with requirements involving training, certification, structure (such as on-site or off-site cardiothoracic surgery backup) and inspections.

- 15 centres for catheter ablations, all with >>400 procedures per year.
- 28 centres for Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator implantation, all with >>100 procedures per year.
- 90 centres for pacemaker implantations
- In 2023, we performed circa 650 ablations per million inhabitants (~50% for atrial fibrillation), circa 850 pacemaker implantations per million inhabitants and circa 170 ICDs per million inhabitants, in a population of nearly 18 million inhabitants (see figures below)

Number of ablations for arrhythmia 2013-2024



Number of secondary prevention Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators 2018-2024



Collaborations & Partnerships

- National partners
 - The NHRA is one of the most important stakeholders in the organization of arrhythmia care in the Netherlands to address all aspects around arrhythmia care, including sustainable health care for future generations, in close collaboration with our partners:
 - Dutch society of Cardiology (NVVC), Dutch Federation of Medical Specialists (FMS), Dutch National Health Care Institute (ZIN), Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), Association for Allied Professionals in Invasive Heart Stimulation (VITHAS), Dutch Heart Foundation (NHS) and patient organizations (Harteraad, STIN).
- International collaborations
 - The NHRA members are actively involved in, e.g., EHRA, ESC, HRS, journal editorial boards, European Reference Networks and research, teaching and advocacy initiatives around the globe.

- Ongoing educational offerings
 - The NHRA published the updated Dutch clinical cardiac electrophysiology curriculum ('CORE') in 2018, including requirements for fellowship programs en EHRA certification, in line with the EHRA core curriculum. Three centres, Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, the Leiden University Medical Center and the Onze Lieve Vrouwe Gasthuis (OLVG) in Amsterdam are currently also official EHRA recognized training centers (ERTC), but many other centers also offer national and international training, education and research opportunities.
- Research projects or registries underway
 - Besides the many collaborative projects of the NHRA members, the NHRA recently initiated a trial in the field of primary prevention ICDs in non-ischemic cardiomyopathy (Dutch-ICD), participates in the EHRA driven trial in primary prevention ICDs in ischemic cardiomyopathy (PROFID) and is currently designing a trial for re-do procedures in atrial fibrillation (STRAFA-NHRA).

Future Vision

- In the NHRA's function as the representation of the Dutch cardiologists who work in the field of arrhythmia, including training and education, quality assurance, research, innovation and advocacy, there are several goals ahead outside our daily practice.
 - Support of the Dutch-ICD and STRAFA-NHRA trials with potential important outcomes for patients with non-ischemic cardiomyopathy and atrial fibrillation in Europe and abroad.
 - Enriching the (online) knowledge base and (organizational) content on arrhythmia care in the Netherlands.
 - Further support and harmonization of sustainable health care for our patients and our colleagues, within NHRA and EHRA.

Contact & Closing

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