

# Young Montreal start-up helps in fight against breast cancer

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The Suburban

According to the latest Canadian Cancer Society statistics, one in nine women across the country can expect to develop breast cancer during their lifetime. As the ageing population increases, the number of cancer diagnoses is expected to rise, and one company in South Shore is creating innovative methods of sterilization for new medical equipment set to pave the way for far more effective treatment.

Dumaine Precision is a five-man company operated out of a converted part of a private residence in South Shore. They specialize in the refurbishment of medical instruments — a niche line of business and one which requires not only an extensive knowledge of tens of thousands of pieces and parts, but also highly specialized skills, surroundings and equipment. Entering the house from which the company operates, you would never suspect that a highly specialist instrument refurbishment lab lurks in the building. The home has been built by Harald-Andreas (Hal) Osberg, local entrepreneur and president of Dumaine Precision. It is from here that the company is creating new sterilization techniques for the latest medical equipment to be making its Montreal debut later in the year.

Incorporated in 2010, the Dumaine Precision team is sanctioned by Health Canada to carry out this highly detailed work and has benefited from the expert craftsmanship of Frédéric Dumaine, the Ste. Therèse born Chief Operations Officer of the company. They have already been able to save Montreal hospitals many hundreds of thousands of dollars in new instrument bills, and the company has built up a world-class team and an enviable client list including many of the major hospitals in Montreal. As Osberg explains "I have often called Frédéric 'the Michael Jackson of surgical instruments'.



Frédéric Dumaine, Chief Operations Officer

his field and his creativity as well as his exceptional work sets him far apart from any competitors." The company already deals with several thousands of instruments every year, which are delivered, to their home-based labs each week from hospitals around the province. The repair shop, which was once a boat-building workshop, is complete with state of the art microscopes, soldering equipment and spare parts. A striking contrast to the luxury, which surrounds it. Extensions to their capacity, including training more staff and building additional hi-tech facilities necessary for repairs to endoscopic equipment, demonstrates the company's confidence in market share growth and their plans to deliver on huge expansion over the coming years.

Their latest project has been to work collaboratively with the MUHC to create a solution to a sterilization problem presented by the latest equipment being used in the treatment of one of Canada's biggest health threats. Patented by the German company, Zeiss, the newest technology in the fight against breast cancer is called "Intrabeam Radiation Technology". The Intrabeam, which has been used for the past three years in the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre in Toronto, will be used in Quebec for the first time later in the year. The device provides intra-operative radiation therapy, meaning that

radiotherapy treatment can begin in the patient as soon as the tumour is removed, with extreme locality precision. Early studies have suggested that use of this technology has cut down recurrence of cancer by 50 per cent.

Dumaine Precision has been working closely with the MUHC, ahead of the first operational use of this cutting edge technology in Montreal. By creating new equipment for the sterilization process, the company has been able to safely extend the shelf life of Intrabeam instruments, thereby opening up this type of therapy to a greater number of women in the future. "The Intrabeam instruments come in a range of sizes," Frédéric Dumaine explained, dressed in a lab coat in the converted workshop. He added "The Intrabeams are stored in a large box which is the same box used for sterilization, and as soon as that box is opened every instrument which it contains becomes contaminated and not safe for use. With current procedures, it would be necessary for the sterilization team to sterilize all of the instruments together in one batch each time a single instrument is used. Since there is a legally determined maximum number of times the equipment can be used and sterilized, this would lead to a quick deterioration and requirement for new, expen-