

MDS Nordion leads Ottawa's life science sector

Building on their foundation of technological expertise, today MDS Nordion's products and services are used throughout the world for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease

Fast facts

Corporate profile

MDS Nordion is a part of MDS Inc., one of the world's foremost global life sciences companies. MDS Nordion is a world leader in providing innovative technologies for medical imaging, targeted cancer treatments, and sterilization of medical devices. The company's products and services are used by hospitals and clinics, medical supply companies, biotech and pharmaceutical companies, and food processors and manufacturers.

Why Ottawa

Acquired from the Canadian government by MDS in 1991, MDS Nordion continues to build on its Ottawa roots. The company is collaborating with the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI), Canada's largest cardiovascular health centre, to establish a Molecular Imaging Centre of Excellence to advance cardiology research.

Business advantage

MDS Nordion provides integrated molecular imaging services and technologies to biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, for drug discovery and development. The company supplies over half of the global demand for molybdenum-99 – the source of technetium-99m – the most widely used isotope for diagnosing disease. It is also a leader in the supply of global demand for cobalt-60, used to sterilize medical products to prevent infection and the spread of disease.

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Why Ottawa

MDS Nordion's roots stretch back to 1946 when it was the radium sales department of Eldorado Mining and Refining.

When radium began to be used as a cancer treatment, Eldorado quickly became familiar with the medical marketplace and adept at developing products that could solve clinical problems and, more importantly, save lives. When Canadian nuclear reactors at Chalk River began producing radioisotopes that outperformed radium, Eldorado's radium sales department was transferred to a new Crown corporation, Ottawa-based Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, created to manage Canada's nuclear research establishment.

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Molecular imaging is an emerging technology that differs from traditional medical imaging as it examines changes at the molecular level within the body, to support early disease detection and treatment assessment. MDS Nordion has invested \$2.2 million in this new centre, which is equipped with a research and development radiochemistry laboratory to support cardiology research.

As a community partner, the company also supports various charitable initiatives of Ottawa-based health institutions that have an interest in making the community a stronger, healthier and happier place to live. Through community commitment, employee involvement and sponsorships, MDS Nordion supports The Ottawa Hospital, the UOHI, and Canadian Blood Services. This commitment to community has earned MDS Nordion awards including Best Employer for New Canadians, National Capital Region Top 20 Employer, and a number of environmental, health and safety awards that reflect the company's strong environmental performance and energy reduction initiatives. MDS Nordion is committed to continue making a difference in the health and well-being of people and families in the community and worldwide.

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In addition, MDS Nordion's products and services are integral to the commercialization of the only two United States FDA-approved radioimmunotherapeutics for the treatment of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, a large group of cancers of the immune system.

Future growth plans

Drug discovery and development will continue to advance molecular and personalized medicine and how it applies to diagnosing and treating disease. MDS Nordion will continue to be a leader in this evolution of health care, focusing on platforms which broaden strategic collaborations and develop innovative technologies that will change the landscape of health care for physicians and their patients.

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