

Inchanga facility to serve as training hospital for DUT

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THE Durban University of Technology (DUT) signed an agreement at the weekend with the new Healing Hills hospital in Inchanga to use the hospital as a training facility for final-year students.

Healing Hills, a psychiatric hospital, is soon to open in the old Inchanga Hotel and will give students experience in a working environment.

"The students will be there under the supervision of their lecturers and mentorship of our professional staff," said the hospital's executive director, Dr Lochan Naidoo. Naidoo said students learning at the hospital would be from the Faculty of Health Services and Hotel School.

He said the students would offer patients complementary medical care, such as body massages and reflexology.

The hospital would also benefit from the "memorandum of understanding" with the DUT that lets the hospital "tap into many of the university's resources".

Naidoo said the old Inchanga Hotel buildings had been renovated and now offered a high standard of accommodation for 45 patients.

Psychologists

He said the hospital would have 35 professional staff, including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and physiotherapists.

His fellow hospital director, Professor Dan Mkize, the former head of psychiatry at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, said Healing Hills would cater mainly for patients who were "not too psychotic". It would offer treatment in peaceful surroundings for those suffering from depres-

sion, anxiety, stress, bipolar mood disorders, panic attacks, schizophrenia and other ailments.

"We will offer short to medium-term treatment," he said. "Many patients will come for a short term of only one to seven days, some for up to 30 days. Most should be fit enough to go home after 30 days."

Mkize said the hospital's overall approach would be to view the patient in his or her family context. "We want families to get involved in the treatment of the patient. We will encourage family visits."

He said Healing Hills would eventually like to enter into a private-public partnership with the government. "That is our aim, especially after the introduction of national health insurance."

Healing Hills, he said, was looking forward to serving the community.