**HPC offers prevention and rehabilitation support**

A CONTRACT employee completing work within the High Performance Complex (HPC) felt unwell, complaining of a pain in his left arm.

The man was in the right place at the right time as staff quickly diagnosed his symptoms, stabalised him and then rushed him to hospital by ambulance where he was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit following a heart attack.

The Biokinetics and Sport Science Centre (BSSU) staff had intervened to save his life – but for the most part, biokineticists and sports scientists specialise in assisting people to manage their lifestyles optimally.

This is regardless of age, physical impairment and disease, says Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University School of Lifestyle Sciences director Prof Rosa du Randt.

With a focus on wellness, the aim is to optimise that which the already compromised person already has. The team endeavours to increase peoples’ physical condition and quality of life by completing doing physical assessments. From here they work out the best training programmes taking into account what they can master as part of the training programme.

 “We assist people-at-risk to manage their diseases through exercise programmes. The HPC is geared for it. The staff is trained to deal with any emergency and is able to identify possible problems before it becomes emergencies,” says Prof Du Randt.

Equipment in the complex can also be used for the rehabilitation of people who, for example, have suffered strokes.

“Through the training programmes we optimise the remaining physical capacity; although it won’t be 100% restoration. However, the brain needs to be stimulated to strengthen remaining and form new neuro-muscular pathways,” adds Prof Du Randt.

**Additional services**

An additional service of the HPC is physical and functional training for firemen as well as emergency medical care professionals in order to prepare them for the physical demands of their occupation

Furthermore, in addition to the five fully-qualified and experienced biokineticists, there are biokinetics honours students and biokinetics interns who interact with patients according to the following arrangement:

* Honours students will always only observe in selected evaluations of patients (and with their permission) observe programme prescription. They will never work with patients in isolation.
* Intern biokineticists are students who have obtained their biokinetics qualification (four-year degree) but who are required to do an additional full year’s internship (fifth year) in an accredited-biokinetics practice and under supervision of an accredited supervisor before they can register with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and practice as recognised biokineticists. Within the first six months of an internship, interns will only observe evaluations and programme prescriptions. In the third term they do evaluations and programme prescriptions under the supervision of an accredited biokinetics supervisor. Only in the last term of year are they allowed to take on less complicated evaluations on their own. In the latter case, they still have the qualified biokineticists available to assist them where necessary.