

Support for life after addiction – one connection at a time

How corporate staff and executives make valuable connections with Central Coast rehabilitation centre ‘The Glen’.

The Glen is a fully-accredited residential alcohol and drug rehabilitation centre on the NSW Central Coast, operated by Ngaimpe Aboriginal Corporation for clients who are mainly Indigenous Australian and male. Over a three- to six-month period, clients are supported to stay clean and sober through group counselling, pastoral care, training and work experience. After they leave, they are helped to maintain positive family relationships and find stable accommodation and employment. It is a firmly holistic model, and proudly based on cultural values of sharing, storytelling and healing. Uniquely appropriate for Indigenous people, The Glen is recognised as a leading provider of effective rehabilitation services nationally.

In 2012, the first Jawun secondee from Bunnings went to The Glen for six weeks. John Newell did a strategic review of how The Glen could best serve large needs with few resources and precarious funding. John also introduced The Glen’s CEO Joe Coyte to the Bunnings’ Area Manager for NSW – who was so impressed that he donated a portable building for 50 more clients to be served a year, and accepted the role of Advisory Board Member.

As a result of the strong and growing relationship between Bunnings and The Glen, a Bunnings job placement scheme was set up in 2013. Each year more clients from The Glen are successfully employed at Bunnings, often breaking a painful cycle of relapse and re-offending.



Clients from The Glen at The Bunnings Job Placement Scheme

Other organisations including KPMG, IAG, Woolworths, Suncorp, Westpac, and the Australian Public Service, have followed in Bunnings’ footsteps. On Jawun secondments, their employees have improved The Glen’s management, community profile, and relations with government. They have provided a range of pro-bono support, from regular fundraising and event sponsorship to tickets for The Glen clients and their families to go to major sports events as part of a healthy reconnection process.

Through Jawun Executive Visits, senior executives also visit The Glen, and other Indigenous organisations locally. They talk at college dance performances with Indigenous youth about to graduate, and around the fire with men preparing to leave The Glen for new, sober lives. By the end of a Visit, many speak of powerful new understandings and connections. QBE’s Steve Raynor admits he did not understand the impact of the Jawun partnership until an Executive Visit gave him *“a greater appreciation of the organisations involved, and an insight into the bigger role executives and companies can play”*.

Executive Visits have led to board appointments, increased numbers of secondees supporting The Glen, and lasting friendships. As Joe Coyte puts it, *“It’s a lifetime thing.”* Which is fitting for an organisation fighting hard to support Indigenous and non-Indigenous men to not only beat addiction, but to build a better life within a more positive Australia.