



Men's Health Information and Resource Centre



Jumna Wal - Creating Better Pathways For Men

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men are imprisoned at seventeen times the rate of non-ATSI males. This enormous problem is compounded by high rates of recidivism, or a cycle of constantly returning to prison.

A new project from the Men's Health Information and Resource Centre based at the UWS Hawkesbury is empowering ATSI men from Western Sydney to find ways to beat this cycle.

Incarceration of Aboriginal males is increasing at a much greater rate than that of non-Aboriginal males. This cycle of a culture where men return to prison over and over again comes from a variety of factors but is largely attributable to historic and cultural factors in the lives of Aboriginal people.

There are a number of specific factors that effectively 'encourage' Aboriginal men to end up in prison.

These include being jailed for minor offences, finding the legal system discriminatory or so



Jumna Wal gets started, October 2011

complex as to be impossible to navigate, or that life outside jail offers so few opportunities that prison effectively becomes more welcoming. The causes are numerous and deeply entrenched.

Since 2004, the Men's Health Information and Resource Centre has explored the causes and factors behind this cycle of returning to jail by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. This program was originally called the 'Revolving Door'.

factsheet

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Jumna Wal is Darug language for 'We Care'. The Darug people are the traditional owners of the land now known as Sydney with a reach from Camden in the south to Wiseman's Ferry in the north and west to the foothills of the Blue Mountains.

Jumna Wal is a new nine week program that aims to provide life skills for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. The program brings interested men to the grounds of Jumna Wal to a place that is safe and trusted.

The program concludes with a three-day cultural camp which reinforces the learnings and personal stories of the men involved.

By linking these men with important service providers in the areas of housing, employment, health services, the legal system and other bodies, Jumna Wal can give at-risk men pathways to a better future.

Although still in its early stages, Jumna Wal is receiving a wholly positive response. It is one way that seeks to link Aboriginal men back to their people and culture. By developing ways to keep them connected to life, Jumna Wal helps them navigate the systems that usually present the greatest problems.

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Week 1: Physical Health Checks

Week 2: Housing NSW and Wentworth Housing

Week 3: Drugs and Alcohol

Week 4: Living Skills and Budgeting

Week 5: Roads & Traffic Authority

Week 6: Family Law & Criminal Law

Week 7: Employment Services

Week 8: Tafe NSW and Education Options

Week 9: Cultural Camp



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