

HearSay

The Official Newsletter of HLAA-PA

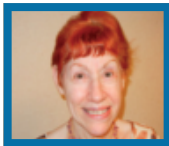
Volume 15 Issue 3 Fall 2016

Hearing Loss
Association
of America
Pennsylvania State Office

MESSAGE FROM NANCY

By Nancy Kingsley, State Director

In June, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine issued Hearing Health Care for Adults: Priorities for Improving Access and Affordability, which recommends changes to promote affordable, high-quality services and technologies. HLAA supports these recommendations, which are briefly summarized below. The full report can be downloaded at www.nas.edu/hearing.



1. Conduct studies on risk factors, hearing health care needs, and the impact of hearing loss.
2. Develop and promote best practices for hearing health care.
3. Remove the FDA requirement for a medical evaluation or waiver before purchasing hearing aids.
4. Ensure that patients know how to exercise their HIPAA rights to access to information about themselves.

5. Improve access to hearing health care among underserved populations.

6. Promote hearing health care in wellness and medical visits.

7. Establish an FDA category for over-the-counter wearable devices for mild to moderate hearing loss.

8. Ensure that hearing aids are interoperable with other technologies and can be programmed by any professional.

9. Improve affordability of hearing health care (various proposals are suggested).

10. Evaluate and implement new approaches to improve access and affordability of hearing health care.

11. Improve publicly available information on hearing health.

12. Promote individual, employer, private sector, and community actions for hearing health and effective communication.

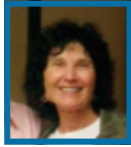
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STATE HAPPENINGS AND OUTREACH*By Carolyn Meyer***HLLA-PA READY TO DISTRIBUTE
NEW PUBLICATIONS:**

Our state organization is working for you to provide you with new, up to date information that you can provide to members, professionals, and to your local communities. Some of the information only applies to Pennsylvania residents so please be sure to check this carefully. The first is the official HLLA-PA brochure "LIVING WELL WITH HEARING LOSS" (to replace the former state office brochure "Having Trouble Hearing?") The brochure, "YOUR HOSPITAL STAY" has also been revised to include current details on your rights when in a hospital or any medical situation.

In addition, there are 2 information sheets that are available if you wish to download them for an outreach or information session for your chapters: "Hearing Aid and Assistive Technology Resources" and "Tinnitus-The Basic Facts You Need to Know". Many thanks to Nancy Kingsley (with input from Advisory Council members) for writing and editing these important information sources in response to many inquiries we have had from the public, especially on tinnitus. The state brochures and hospital stay brochures are available when you request them from chapter leaders or email Nancy Kingsley kingsley@hllaa-pa.org. If your chapter leader is at the next Advisory Council meeting October 15 we will have these available to save postage costs.

STATE APPEAL:

HLLA-PA needs your help. Do you shop on Amazon? Here is a cost-free way for you to support HLLA-PA on all your purchases!

Amazon shoppers can have part of their purchase price (0.5%) donated to HLLA-PA by going to smile.amazon.com, entering "Hearing Loss Association of America Pennsylvania State Office" in the search box, and clicking "SELECT." Once that is done, it's only necessary to go to the AmazonSmile link to make future purchases--the donation amount will be automatically credited to HLLA-PA. Please pass this on to your family and friends! So easy to do.

OUTREACH:**FALL EVENTS:**

October 17: Philadelphia Chapter 1 Suburban/Northeast will present "Strategies for Living with Hearing Loss" to the Lower Moreland Community at the Huntingdon Valley Library, 625 Red Lion Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006 from 7-8 PM.

The chapter wants to show its appreciation for all the

years the library has allowed the chapter to have its meetings there. Anyone can attend but must RSVP to the library pdull@mclinc.org. The chapter hopes it may reach some possible new members who live in the adjacent community as well. Carolyn Meyer will do a PowerPoint presentation with chapter members interacting with the audience.

ODHH HEARING LOSS EXPO:2016

November 2 (12-7 PM) and November 3 (9-3PM):

ODHH is The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing within the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

HLLA-PA will have 2 exhibit tables: one with our HLLA information materials and the other manned by Bill Best, our ALD Coordinator who will demonstrate the assistive technology devices that HLLA-PA presently owns in our Demo Kit. The EXPO is open to the public and free. Location: Radisson Harrisburg Hotel. For further information www.dli.pa/odhh.

HLLA-PA ALD Coordinator - Bill Best on the Road:

Bill continues outreach activities across the state through demonstration and presentation of Assistive Listening Devices. His recent past and future activities include:

August 8: Consumer Group at Altoona Center for Independent Living

September 12 -HLLA State College Chapter Meeting

September 17 – HLLA Pittsburgh Chapter Meeting

Having recently completed the national HLLA sponsored training program on assistive technology (N-CHATT), Bill expects to bring new information to these presentations regarding the evolution of innovative technology solutions to help people with hearing loss. See "Tech Topics" in this issue for more information about N-CHATT. To contact Bill to see if he is available for your future events. - best@hllaa-pa.org

The Advisory Council of HLLA-PA: Sat., Oct. 15

The Council would like your input. Would you like to be an observer at our next meeting. We meet in the Manheim Township Public Library in Lancaster, PA from 9:30 until 3:30 PM with a break for lunch. All meetings are accessible with live CART and a hearing loop. Need a ride? Contact meyer@hllaa-pa.org if you are interested. Perhaps you would like to be on the Council. This would be a good way to find out. Chapter leaders: perhaps you would like to send a delegate to voice some concern. The Council focuses on issues that involve people with hearing loss throughout the state. With only 3 meetings a year, the rest of our business is done by email. Please notify Nancy Kingsley of your interest in attending. kingsley@hllaa-pa.org

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<http://www.pennmedicine.org/otorhinolaryngology/patient-care/clinical-programs/audiology/>



PENNSYLVANIA WALK4HEARING!

Put it on your calendar!

Sunday October 9, 2016

The Navy Yard
4747 South Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA

10am - Registration/Check-in

11am - Walk begins

Distance: 5K (3.1 miles)

Any questions? Contact Walk Chair:

Ronnie Adler

Something exciting is coming up soon!

It's the 11th PA Walk4Hearing! It's happening on Sunday, October 9, at The Navy Yard (4747 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19112). There will be balloon twisters, moon bounces, face painters, a caricature artist and more for all the walkers and their family and friends to enjoy. There will be plenty of food and drinks and various vendors will be sharing information about the latest services and technology available for people with hearing loss. Walkers will enjoy the scenic Delaware River by The Navy Yard, the parade grounds, historical naval buildings, docked Navy boats, and will even see the Wells Fargo Center during the 3.1 mile long walk! Registration opens at 10am.

To join the walk, please register online (www.walk4hearing.org) or in person the day of the walk. You may create your own team or join one that is already registered. Do ask your friends and family to join. We have many families and teams that bring their own tents and enjoy the day with the free entertainment and food. When you create a team you will be asked which organization, chapter, or state office will receive a portion of the funds you raise. Not only are you contributing to the Hearing Loss Association of America's (HLAA) national office which provides many services, you are contributing to another cause close to your heart.



2015 Walk4Hearing



The Evolution of Hearing aids

Years ago, hearing aids were analog and amplified *everything* (voices and noise alike). If someone whispered, the hearing aid volume needed to be increased. Conversely, if someone laughed or spoke loudly, the instruments needed to be turned down. They often amplified frequencies that the wearer did not need amplified. Additionally, hearing aids historically whistled a lot.

Then hearing aids became programmable (but still analog). The audiologist could use computer software to vary the frequency response to more closely match a patient's hearing loss. This made hearing aids a little clearer and more pleasant sounding, but they still amplified noise and voices equally.

Around 1990, digital hearing aids were introduced. They were able to suppress noise a little ("noise reduction"), and they could amplify soft sounds more than loud sounds, thus keeping amplified speech within the user's comfort range. The volume control no longer needed to be manipulated excessively and the aids also whistled less due to feedback cancellation technology. Directional microphones became more advanced, reducing noise behind the listener while focusing on speech in front.

Technology continued to advance rapidly. Every year, manufacturers came up with something smaller and more technologically advanced. Today, there are several different levels of technology based on the patient's lifestyle and the amount of ambient noise encountered. For someone who communicates in predominantly quiet environments, a lower level of technology is usually sufficient. For someone who is very active and encounters a wide variety of background noise and crowded environments, a higher level of technology is best. There are several levels in between the lowest and highest.

When choosing a hearing aid, purchasers need to consider their lifestyle, the degree and shape of their hearing loss, any physical limitations, and cosmetic appeal. While a tiny hearing aid may be cosmetically appealing, it may be more difficult to handle given its small size and tiny battery. Even a larger battery may be difficult for some people to handle. In that case, a rechargeable hearing aid may be best.

Two hearing aids are better than one. We have two ears so we can localize and tell where sound is coming from. Additionally, it's difficult to separate voices in a group when hearing is not equal in both ears.

There are hearing aids that can connect with cellphones and other devices wirelessly via Bluetooth, enabling cell phone conversation and music to be transferred directly to the hearing aids. There are many assistive listening devices that can help with landline phones, television listening, lectures and meetings, and crowded restaurants. There is even a cellphone app that can be used like a remote control to change the hearing aid settings and help find a lost hearing aid!

Styles of hearing aids:

Custom molded:

IIC – Invisible in-the-canal: Fits deep into the ear canal. Uses a tiny battery. Battery life: about 3-5 days. For mild to moderate hearing loss. Does not have a directional microphone. Not appropriate for people with very narrow ear canals or who accumulate a lot of earwax.

CIC – Completely-in-the-canal: Uses a tiny battery. Battery life: about 3-5 days. For mild to moderately-severe hearing loss. Not appropriate for very narrow ear canals or for those who accumulate a lot of earwax. Some can be wireless (for Bluetooth connectivity).

ITC – In-the-canal hearing aid: Medium sized battery. Battery life: about 7-10 days. For mild to severe hearing loss. Directional microphone available. Can be wireless (for Bluetooth connectivity).

ITE – In-the-ear hearing aid: Uses a somewhat larger battery. Battery life: about 10-14 days. For mild to severe hearing loss. Directional microphone available. Can be wireless (for Bluetooth connectivity).

Non-custom:

RIC – Receiver-in-the-canal: Small hearing aid that fits behind the ear with a thin wire connecting the hearing aid to a dome (or custom earmold) in the ear canal. The receiver (transmitter) is in the ear canal. Various battery sizes. Various strength receivers appropriate for mild to profound hearing loss. Directional microphone available. Can be wireless (for Bluetooth connectivity) and/or rechargeable. May not be the best choice for someone who accumulates a lot of earwax.

BTE – Behind-the-ear hearing aid: Hearing aid fits behind the ear with either a larger tube connected to a custom earmold in the ear or a thinner tube connected to a small dome in the ear canal. Various battery sizes. Directional microphone available. Can be wireless (for Bluetooth connectivity) and/or rechargeable. Best choice for someone who accumulates earwax. For mild to profound hearing loss.

- Pam Anger, AuD, Audiologist, Penn Medicine

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at Temple University

disabilities.temple.edu

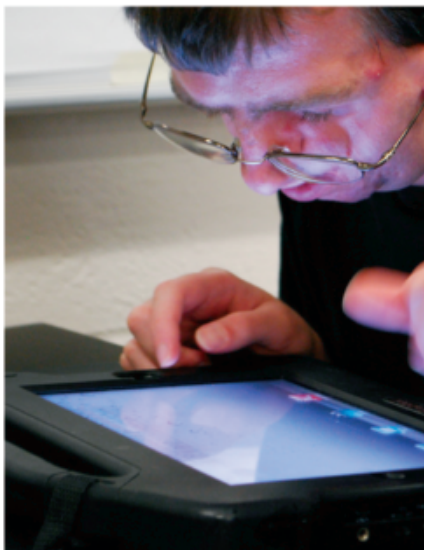


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To be eligible, you must:

- Be a Pennsylvania resident with a disability that limits your access to mobile telecommunication;
- Be six years of age or older;
- Have individual gross income of 200% of the federal poverty level or less (low income); and
- Have the ability to learn how to use the device.

Program requirements:

Several meetings at Temple University in Philadelphia are required throughout the year.

For more information:

TEL: 800-204-7428 voice / 866-268-0579 TTY
EMAIL: TDDP@temple.edu

OR GO TO: disabilities.temple.edu/tddp



College of Education

TDDP is a program of Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT), a program of the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University. TDDP is operated in collaboration with the PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Public Utility Commission.

About the 2016 HLAA Convention

I thoroughly enjoyed the HLAA Convention 2016 in Washington, DC. Receiving the Diana Bender Scholarship gave me the great opportunity to attend. At first I was amazed at the scope and size of the convention. All the people who spent so much time putting everything together did a great job. I was in the printing business and know the time involved just in preparing the program guide, let alone getting speakers, scheduling the sessions, and organizing every detail. Many talented people did a great job.

I really appreciated the comment by one of the speakers that this was the most accessible convention ever! It was heartening to be able to hear the speakers through my telecoil and to be surrounded by so many people with such a range of hearing issues. I now realize the scope of hearing loss and feel less alone and lost. I met many people who gave me advice, strategies, and ideas for living with hearing loss.

I liked the way the sessions were broken down into five categories. That made it easier for me to focus on my areas of interest. Since it was my first convention, I chose many sessions that could help me improve my quality of life and learn about the latest technology for living with hearing aids and other assistive listening

devices (ALDs). My favorite session was “Amplify Your Audiology Appointment,” presented by Tina Childress. I also added some advocacy sessions and of course visited the informative and helpful vendors in the exhibit hall.

The plenary sessions were incredible (although at times over my head), educational and challenging. I learned that there are many highly educated professionals working to help people with hearing loss. These sessions are an absolutely necessary part of the convention. They feature speakers who are educated in scientific, medical, and technical fields and help everyone know about the wide range of work being done to help the hard of hearing population.

The Saturday banquet provided a good opportunity to meet up with fellow chapter members with whom we lost contact during the abundance of sessions. The emcee, Gael Hannan, and the mentalist Max Major enlivened the evening. She was so funny and he was mind-blowing. A great time!

The convention is an amazing opportunity to learn, meet people, and be surrounded with everything related to hearing loss.

- Judy Shugarts, Chester County Chapter

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A Picture Postcard from the HLAA Convention 2016

Having a wonderful time in DC,
wish you were here.

Yes, we were in Washington, although my dome was photoshopped onto Mr. Jefferson's. HLAA-PA's Carolyn and Joe Meyer and I were in the exhibit hall at the HLAA convention, amid MRI-tolerant cochlear implants, captioning phones, and organizations from Gallaudet University to Regal Cinemas by way of Dogs for the Deaf and the Transportation Security Administration.

This year's joint gathering with the International Federation of Hard Of Hearing People (IFHOH) brought together 1,200 people from 22 countries, plus families, friends, and service dogs from miniature pony size down to (I kid thee not) a Chihuahua. And being close to Bethesda, Maryland, we got to put a face to many familiar names from HLAA's national office.

"Blindness cuts us off from things," said Helen Keller, "but deafness cuts us off from people." It was encouraging to see so much being done to ensure that nobody was cut off.

In addition to good conventional (pun unintended!) sound in the plenary and group sessions, there was CART (live captioning) on screens and via the Internet, sign language interpreters, huge screens showing plenary presenters, and hearing loops like NFL gridirons with parallel wires across the floor every few feet.

As for one-on-one communication, hearing loss advocate and comedian Gael Hannan was funny with serious purpose in laying down some ground rules: Thou shalt not nod, smile, and feign comprehension. If you mishear me once, I should rephrase. If you mishear me twice, probably shame on me. And it's not rude to point one's Roger Pen.

European attendees were flabbergasted that Americans have to pay anything, never mind some serious money, for hearing assistive devices. The plenary session *The Academies and PCAST Reports Explained* (see HLAA's webpage at www.hearingloss.org/content/hlaa-supports-new-report-change-hearing-health-care) gave hope of

relief via over-the-counter devices and greater freedom of choice. To what extent anything will be implemented remains to be seen.

To this 60-year-old, the Research Symposium smacked of sci-fi. Injection of DNA via viruses has led to regeneration of inner ear hair cells in some animals, and it's a matter of time before we humans can be fixed. Some of us won't be around to see this, but it's great news for our descendants.

The educational and state/chapter workshops were divided into five themes: Advocacy; Assistive Technology and Large Area Systems; Hearing Aids and Cochlear Implants; Living your Life; and State/Chapter Development. The variety and number of sessions made it frustrating that I could only be in one place at a time. There was too much good stuff to even try to summarize, alas.

Returning to my "postcard": Here's a grateful hug to Carolyn and Joe for "adopting" this first-timer; to Milton Gottlieb, a scholarship in whose memory allowed me to attend; to my chapter for nominating me; and to all the strangers who hugged me, figuratively and sometimes literally.

If deafness cuts us off from people, then perhaps the convention, and HLAA itself, are an antidote to that isolation in the form of a big hug?

- Steve Bremner, Center City Philly Chapter



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Ask the Expert - **THE TRUTH ABOUT COCHLEAR IMPLANTS**

Straining to hear each day, even when using powerful hearing aids?

Feeling frustrated and sometimes even exhausted from listening? Whether it happens suddenly or gradually over time, hearing loss can affect you physically and emotionally. Being unable to hear impacts your ability to communicate with your loved ones, hear in noisy environments, talk on the phone, and may force you to become more reliant on your family members to interpret for you.

Cochlear implants work differently than hearing aids. Rather than amplifying sound, they use sophisticated software and state-of-the-art electronic components to provide access to the sounds you've been missing. They are designed to help you hear better and understand speech in all situations, including noisy environments.



David C. Kelsall, M.D.,
Cochlear Medical Advisor

Dr. David C. Kelsall, a cochlear implant surgeon and medical advisor to Cochlear, the world leader in cochlear implants, answers questions about cochlear implants and how they are different from hearing aids.

Q: How are cochlear implants different than hearing aids?

A: Hearing aids help many people by making the sounds they hear louder. Unfortunately, as hearing loss progresses, sounds need to not only be made louder, they need to be made clearer. Cochlear implants can help give you that clarity, especially in noisy environments. If you suffer from high frequency hearing loss but maintain your hearing in the low frequencies, there is a solution called Hybrid™ Hearing that may be able to help as well. Be sure to discuss your options with a Hearing Implant Specialist in your area.

Q: Are cochlear implants covered by Medicare?

A: Yes, by Medicare and most private insurance plans.

Q: How do I know a cochlear implant will work for me?

A: The technology is very reliable. In fact, it has been around for over 30 years and has helped change the lives of over 400,000 people worldwide.

Q: Is it major surgery?

A: No, not at all. In fact, the procedure is often done on an outpatient basis and typically takes just a couple hours.

Q: Am I too old to get a cochlear implant?

A: No, it's never too late to regain access to the sounds you're missing

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- Learn about medical treatment for severe to profound hearing loss
- Talk with others who hear with cochlear implants
- Learn how cochlear implants are covered by Medicare, most insurance plans, and may be covered by Medicaid.



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For more information visit www.CochlearAmericas.com or click on the link below to find an informational meeting close to you. <http://www.cochlear.com/wps/wcm/connect/us/home/stories-and-community/events-calendar/cochlear-americas-events>

You should talk to your physician about who is a candidate for implantation with a cochlear implant and the associated risks and benefits of the procedure. ©2015 Cochlear Limited. All rights reserved. Trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of Cochlear Limited or Cochlear Bone Anchored Solutions.

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HAAA-PA PICNIC

The annual Southeastern HAAA-PA picnic, now in its 17th year, was hosted by MontCo HAAA chapter on Sunday, July 17, 2016.



This year's picnic was held in scenic Fort Washington State Park, and the cool breezes under



the shady pavilion provided a welcome relief from a hot summer's day.

HAAA members and friends from local chapters contributed chicken, salads, side dishes and desserts, and a fun time was had by all.

- Diana Bender



Visit HAAA on the web!
hearingloss.org or scan this QR code on your smartphone..



Visit HAAA-PA on the web!
hlaa-pa.org or scan this QR code on your smartphone, for latest news and a calendar of events.

Pickles



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TECH TOPICS

Network of Consumer Hearing Assistive Technology Trainers (N-CHATT) is a volunteer consumer *train-the-trainer program* supported by HLAA. The program’s goal is to build a network of consumer trainers with the knowledge and skills necessary to train others impacted by hearing loss. Trainers will assist others in the successful integration of hearing assistive technology (HAT) to support individual hearing and communication needs at home, work, school, and the community. This program is a partnership with Gallaudet University, American Institutes for Research, and Hands & Voices and is supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), through Gallaudet University’s Deaf/Hard of Hearing Technology Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC) (Grant # 90RE5020). You can find more information about N-CHATT at www.hearingloss.org/content/n-chatt-training.

HLAA-PA assistive technology coordinator Bill Best,

was selected to participate in the year-long pilot for the N-CHATT program. The training included webinars, online modules, and a two-day workshop at HLAA headquarters in Bethesda, MD that featured presentations on training activities and hearing assistive technology topics, hands-on technology exploration, and opportunities for training practice and interactive learning.

After previous HLAA training on HAT and assistive listening devices (ALDs) in 2012, Bill traveled around the state with the HLAA-PA ALD kit to conduct demonstrations and presentations at HLAA chapters and many other organizations. With the benefit of this more recent training, Bill will continue these efforts and will also be updating the ALD kit and related information, as the HAT field is evolving rapidly with new technology options. You can contact Bill at best@hlaa-pa.org for more information or to schedule a program for your consumer group. Also, continue to watch future issues of this newsletter for more **Tech Topics**.

2016 MARCIA FINISDORE AWARD FOR ADVOCACY Nominations Due November 15, 2016

The *Marcia Finisdore Award for Advocacy* was established by HLAA-PA in 2004 to honor our first state director. Marcia has been a tireless advocate for people with hearing loss throughout her life. This award is presented to an individual in recognition of excellence in improving communication access for hard of hearing people.

The criteria for selection are:


- A positive vision for the hard of hearing community and a continuing commitment to leadership
- A demonstrated record of advocacy work for the rights and needs of hard of hearing people in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Nominations should include a written statement about the nominee and why this individual deserves the award. Please include contact information for yourself, as well as for the nominee.

Nominations should be sent to:

Diana Bender - Bender@hlaa-pa.org or 126 Cedarcroft Road, Kennett Square, PA, 19348

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I would like to remain anonymous.

I cannot donate but would like to receive HearSay.

Mail to: Mitch Bilker, Treasurer
821 Rosehill Drive
King of Prussia, PA 19406

About HLAA and its State Office, HLAA-PA

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), founded in 1979, is the nation's foremost membership and advocacy organization for people with hearing loss. HLAA opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support and advocacy. The national support network includes the Washington, DC area office, 14 state organizations, and 200 local chapters. HLAA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Hearing Loss Association of America
7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814
www.hearingloss.org

HLAA-PA is the all-volunteer state office of Hearing Loss Association of America. We were established in 2001 to carry out the mission of HLAA for Pennsylvanians with hearing loss, their families and friends.

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