



## CULTURE ADVANTAGE PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL INTERPRETER PROGRAMS

Culture Advantage is approved as a provider of continuing nursing education by the California Board of Nursing. Continuing Education Provider 15854 for September 22, 2011 to September 30, 2015. This program is applicable towards continuing education for relicensure of RNs and LPNs.

*Curriculum is subject to change without notice. Please visit the [Culture Advantage](#) website for the most current version.*

Culture Advantage prepares medical interpreters with the competencies to interpret the source message into the target language with fluency, accuracy, and comprehension, while supporting patient safety and quality of care as the ultimate goal of the encounter.

We build a strong foundation in anatomy and medical terminology in both working languages, in addition, to personal coaching of students in the standards, code of ethics, roles of the interpreter, protocols, and communication skills while providing the student with a supportive online environment.

As healthcare professionals, we use authentic medical scenarios and guide the student in interpreting with accuracy while providing the medical provider's perspective along with the interpreter's perspective, giving the student a well-rounded view of the medical interpreting profession.

Culture Advantage takes pride in their high standards for accuracy and professional interpreting skills for the graduates, and uncompromising commitment to patient safety and quality of care.

### PROGRAMS:

1. Professional Medical Interpreter Program (60-Hour Certificate): 4-Week Intensive Online Program
2. Professional Medical Interpreter Program (70-Hour Certificate): 4-9 Week Online Program
3. Basic Medical Interpreter Program (40-Hour Certificate): 6-Week Online Program
4. Interpreter Continuing Education and Advanced Certificates in Medical Specialties

### FEATURES:

- Taught by healthcare professionals (MDs, RNs, LPNs, PTs) and professional interpreters (CMI, CHI).
- Approved for continuing education for RNs and LPNs.
- Specializing on preparing bilingual healthcare professionals (HCP) with competencies for medical interpreting.
- Individualized FAST TRACK Program for HCPs affording them with the most flexibility.
- Listed in the Trainers Directory of the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) as meeting or exceeding the 40-hour requirement for national certification.
- Emphasis on strong foundation of health literacy in both languages as the basic preparation for professional interpreters for the medical setting.
- Principles of Medical Interpreting courses focusing on the IMIA, NCIHC and CHIA Standards.

\*Not included in the Basic40 Program. \*\* Basic40 and Fast Track Programs may have different requirements.

- Patient-centered preparation for medical interpreters with perspectives from healthcare providers and professional medical interpreters.
- Culture Advantage Standards for Medical Interpreters developed by our team of healthcare professionals.
- Based on adult learning principles, independent learning is expected of participants.
- Flexible asynchronous instructor-led online and offline assignments.
- One-on-one coaching/mentoring by healthcare professionals and/or CMIs/CHIs.
- Live practice sessions and authentic medical scenarios prepared by healthcare professionals
- Live one-on-one coaching and assessment sessions.
- Live Medical Terminology Drills conducted by healthcare professionals (RNs, MDs, PTs, NMTs)
- Language-specific programs offered in Arabic, Russian, Chinese Mandarin, Korean, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.
- Discounts to continuing education courses for one year after graduation.
- Content and presentation format can be customized based on the organization's needs. May be offered online, onsite or blended format.
- Professional Programs meet or exceed the content requirements for the NBCMI National Certification and NCIHC Certification exams.
- Strong track record of preparing [certified medical interpreters](#).

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### PART 1: MEDICAL CONCEPTS: ENGLISH 10 HOURS

1. Word Parts and Word Combinations: English
2. Basic Anatomy and Medical Terminology: English
3. Terminology for common diagnosis, treatments and procedures
4. Medical Specialties, abbreviations and equipment – basic level
5. Medical Abbreviations and Procedures – intermediate level\*

### PART 2: MEDICAL CONCEPTS: OTHER LANGUAGE 20 HOURS (ARABIC, CHINESE MANDARIN, JAPANESE, KOREAN, PORTUGUESE, RUSSIAN, SPANISH, VIETNAMESE)

1. Basic Anatomy in the language pair.
2. Medical Terminology in the language pair.
3. Intermediate-level Specialty Topics: Disease-specific anatomy, diagnoses, procedures and treatments in both languages.
4. For the 60-70-Hour Program, one 5- Hour Elective on a specialty topic (Cardiovascular, Endocrine, Obstetrics, Orthopedics, etc.) is included. \*

### PART 3: MEDICAL INTERPRETING SKILLS AND PRINCIPLES 30 HOURS

1. US Healthcare System and Cultural Competency 4 Hours\*
2. Introduction to Interpreting and Standards of Practice: IMIA, NCIHC, CHIA 4 hours
3. Code of Ethics: IMIA, NCIHC, CHIA (RID included for ASL interpreters) 8 Hours
4. Roles of the Interpreter: IMIA, NCIHC, CHIA 4 Hours
5. Integrative Skills: Consecutive Interpreting Beginner Simultaneous Interpreting, Sight Translation, Managing the Communication Flow. 4 Hours (Also integrated in Modules 2, 3, 4)

\*Not included in the Basic40 Program. \*\* Basic40 and Fast Track Programs may have different requirements.



6. Intermediate Interpreting Skills: Cross-cultural Communication, Professional Communication Skills in the Healthcare Setting. Interpreting high-register and complex scenarios. \* 6 Hours

. \*Not included in the Basic Program.

Fast Track Program may have a different format. For the 70-Hour program, one 5-Hour elective in advanced interpreting concepts is included.

## PROGRAM FORMAT

- Mentors/Instructors are trained medical interpreters with MD or RN or RN+LPN team or PT/NMT background and education.
- One-on-One feedback and mentoring in both languages from MD or RN for medical concepts and interpreting skills.
- Instructor-facilitated online independent study with online lessons, audio assignments and written quizzes and exams. Written, audio assignments and/or tests are submitted for every lesson.
- Each lesson must be completed with satisfactory grade before proceeding to the next. Mentors with healthcare background and professional medical interpreter training evaluate the participant's fluency, accuracy, and comprehension of medical concepts before access to Part 3, Medical Interpreting Skills and Principles, is approved.
- Mentors with healthcare background and/or CMI/CHIs evaluate the participant's interpreting skills in both languages.
- Completion Time of 60 or 70 hours for the professional programs is based on the average number of hours of completion. (Basic program with 40 hours average completion time.)
- Individual practice time, assignment time, and additional research time are not included in the average completion time.
- Completion time depends on various factors such as the participant's previous educational preparation, language skills, Internet skills, Internet connectivity, time constraints, etc.
- Part 1 must be completed successfully before access is given to Part 2, Part 2 must be successfully completed before access is given to Part 3.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS: \*\*

1. Education: College-level education or five years of combined professional work experience with at least 2 years of college-level education.
2. Language Proficiency – English. Any of the following is accepted:\*\*\*
  - Graduation from high school in the US or in a country where English is the medium of instruction.
  - College major in English.
  - Professional work experience where English and the other language were spoken - 5 years
  - Validated Language Proficiency Testing equivalent to ILR-2.5 or higher.
3. Language Proficiency – Other language. Any of the following is accepted:\*\*\*
  - Graduation from high school in a country where the other language is the medium of instruction.
  - College major in the other language.
  - Professional work experience where English and the other language were spoken - 5 years
  - Validated Language Proficiency Testing equivalent to ILR-2.5 or higher.

\*Not included in the Basic40 Program. \*\* Basic40 and Fast Track Programs may have different requirements.

4. Basic Internet skills: Ability to send and receive email, follow links, download and upload files, access to audios and videos, etc.
5. Basic computer skills: Familiarity and ability to download and read WORD document, PDF files, PowerPoint, printing documents, etc.
5. Personal computer (PC or MAC) with Internet access and appropriate software to view the lessons.
7. Telephone access.
8. Computer with microphone and audio recording software.
9. Pass Culture Advantage Screening and Placement Test with at least 90% grade.

\*\*Basic Program and Fast Track Programs may have different requirements.

## PROGRAM COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

Certificate of Completion of the Professional Medical Interpreter Program will be awarded upon satisfactory fulfillment of Part 1, Part 2, Part 3 and the comprehensive Final Exam within the Program Plan. If the candidate is not able to complete the program, a letter of attendance (not a certificate) will be issued, if requested, to verify attendance, (provided at least Part 1 has been completed with satisfactory performance), but that the requirements for graduation were not completed. Limited monthly extensions are available if unable to complete the program within the Program Plan. (Refer to our Attendance Verification Policy for details.)

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS TO RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION:

1. At least 80-90% average grade on all quizzes.
2. At least 90% grade on all exams.
3. All oral and written assignments with satisfactory feedback from the mentor.
4. Pass the Final Exam with 90% grade and high degree of accuracy in interpretation. (Refer to the specific program plan for details on the Final Exam requirements.)

## CURRICULUM: PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL INTERPRETER PROGRAM

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### PART 1: MEDICAL SECTION

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#### ANATOMY AND MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY

The emphasis of the Medical Terminology course is on the accurate interpretation of the source message to the target language of patient education and information during healthcare encounters.

\*Not included in the Basic40 Program. \*\* Basic40 and Fast Track Programs may have different requirements.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

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Basic Medical Terminology is taught using combination of written lectures, audios, videos, and patient education material. The lessons include anatomy, common diagnostic procedures, treatment and equipment, and medical specialties.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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By the end of this section, the student would be able to:

1. Identify the locations of the major structures of the human body.
2. Define common medical terminology associated with the major body systems.
3. Explain common medical terminology using word parts (prefix, root word, suffix) and word combinations as appropriate.
3. Explain terminology related to common diseases, diagnoses and symptoms, diagnostic procedures and treatments and common medical equipment and devices.
4. Compile a comprehensive *personal glossary* of anatomy and medical terms in the participant's language pair that covers the 10 body systems. (500-term Bilingual Glossary for the Basic40 Program, 700-term Bilingual Glossary for the professional programs.)
5. Accurately describe and pronounce medical specialties, diagnoses, symptoms, and patient education information in the language pair.\*
6. Demonstrate ability to conduct online search and verification of medical terms and symptoms using credible sources of information.\*
7. Demonstrate knowledge of common acronyms and abbreviations in medicine and recognize the dangers of using abbreviations.
8. Demonstrate accountability for own learning achievement by completing assignments, tests and learning activities independently and documenting sources of information as appropriate.

\*Not included in the Basic40 Program.

## COURSE CONTENT

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1. Basic anatomy of the human body.
2. Introduction to word parts and word combinations (Prefix, suffix, root words).
3. Cardiovascular diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
4. Musculoskeletal and skin diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
5. Digestive diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
6. Endocrine diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
7. Neurological diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
8. Respiratory diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
9. Renal diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
10. Reproductive system diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
11. Blood and immune system diseases, treatments, and procedures and specialties.
12. Medications, Procedures, Equipment and Medical Devices.
13. Bonus Lessons: Medical Abbreviations and Equipment, Dental and Mental Health Terminology.\*

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PART 2: LANGUAGE PACK: AVAILABLE IN ARABIC, CHINESE, KOREAN, JAPANESE, PORTUGUESE, RUSSIAN, SPANISH, VIETNAMESE).

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**COURSE CONTENT:**

1. Basic Anatomy
2. Cardiovascular diseases, treatments, and procedures
3. Musculoskeletal and skin diseases, treatments, and procedures
4. Digestive diseases, treatments, and procedures
5. Endocrine diseases, treatments, and procedures
6. Neurological diseases, treatments, and procedures
7. Respiratory diseases, treatments, and procedures
8. Renal diseases, treatments, and procedures
9. Reproductive System diseases, treatments, and procedures
10. Blood and Immune System diseases, treatments, and procedures
11. Online research skills

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**PROFESSIONAL CORE CURRICULUM ADVANCED CONCEPTS: SPECIALTIES\***

More in-depth lessons on specialty topics. The student will demonstrate comprehension of at least two major diseases and disorders for each body system: diagnosis, symptoms, diagnostic procedures, treatment, medication, and patient education and ability to explain and interpret complex concepts and high register medical encounters from English into the other language and vice-versa.

Specific topics may vary depending on the language pair and program plan.

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**COURSE CONTENT**

1. Cardiology: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: MI, CABG, PTCA, Afib, etc.)
  2. Orthopedics: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: Fractures, RA, DJD, arthroplasties, etc.)
  3. Dermatology: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: Burns, skin infections, wound care)
  4. Gastroenterology: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: EGD, GERD, Colon surgeries)
  5. Endocrinology: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: Diabetes, diabetic diet)
  6. Neurology: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: CVA, TIA, types of stroke, epilepsy)
  7. Pulmonology: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: COPD, TB, bronchoscopy, respiratory treatments)
  8. Urology and Nephrology: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: UTI, kidney failure, dialysis, urological procedures and surgeries)
  9. Obstetrics and Gynecology: Selected Diseases and Disorders (Topic examples: Pregnancy, labor and delivery, ovarian cyst, endometriosis, STDs.)
  10. Oncology and the Immune System: Selected Blood Disorders. (Topic examples: Cancer, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, blood transfusion, HIV-AIDS, infections.)
- Electives: Choose one additional advanced topic from a major body system.

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## PART 3: MEDICAL INTERPRETING PRINCIPLES

The emphasis of the Medical Interpreting Principles course is on the understanding and application of medical interpreting standards of practice, code of ethics, roles of the interpreter and on consecutive interpreting skills that reflect authentic medical interpreting encounters.

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### FORMAT: INDEPENDENT STUDY

Independent study using the resources provided, supplemented with online discussions and offline assignments. Participants are expected to read and understand the articles and resources independently. Participants are expected to spend additional practice time outside the online course materials and live practice sessions. Online forums are provided for the participants to discuss questions, share experiences, and provide support. If more in-depth discussion or more practice is required to develop interpreting skills. Private tutoring or private coaching is available as an extra service.

(Culture Advantage reserves the term “medical” to refer to medical care provided in primary care, acute or emergency clinical setting, and “healthcare” as a general term that may refer to the overall healthcare of a country or region, or to specific community health services, public health communication, and other services that may or may not involve medical treatment.)

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## I. US HEALTHCARE SYSTEM AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Define commonly used general healthcare terminology.
2. Explain how healthcare is accessed in the United States.
3. List examples of medical emergencies.
4. Explain different medical specialties.
5. Differentiate between basic insurance-related terms.
6. Define HIPAA, LEP, CLAS, Joint Commission, health disparities, cultural competency, and language access.
7. Discuss the legal liability of the medical interpreter.
8. Recognize the role of culture in healthcare communication.\*
9. Recognize the relationship between health literacy and health outcomes.\*
10. List examples of culturally competent services.\*
11. Define medical ethics and bioethics.\*
12. Explain the similarities and differences between medical ethics and medical interpreter’s code of ethics.\*
13. Practice interpreting patient safety and healthcare systems information.\*

## II. MEDICAL INTERPRETERS STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING 1

### Learning Outcomes.

1. Summarize the medical interpreter's standards of practice based on the International Medical Interpreter's Association (IMIA) standards, the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC) standards, and the California Healthcare Interpreters Association (CHIA) standards.\*
2. Discuss accuracy, confidentiality, impartiality and professionalism within the medical interpreting context.\*
3. Given a medical encounter scenario, choose the most appropriate interpreter action based on the standards (IMIA, NCIHC, and CHIA, RID for ASL interpreters).
4. Distinguish between first-person and third-person interpreting; between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting; and between translation and interpreting.
5. Demonstrate professional introduction, pre-session, self-correction, and closure activities.
6. Demonstrate beginner consecutive interpreting skills such as note-taking, asking for clarification appropriately, and accurately, fluently, and completely interpreting 1-2 sentences into the target language reflecting knowledge of common diseases and disorders in the language-pair.

## III. CODE OF ETHICS AND CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING 2

### Learning Outcomes:

1. Summarize the IMIA Code of Ethics.
1. Discuss the similarities and differences between the IMIA Code of Ethics and the NCIHC Code of Ethics.\*
2. Discuss ethical decision-making based on the CHIA Standards.\*
3. Given a case study, explain how the Code of Ethics will guide the interpreter's practice in the healthcare setting.
4. Demonstrate sight translation of at least two documents into the target language.
5. Demonstrate consecutive interpreting skills by interpreting familiar medical encounters and terminology from English into the target language and vice versa.
6. Interpret end-of-life care situations and advance directives with accuracy and cultural sensitivity.\*
7. Demonstrate consecutive interpreting skills by accurately and completely interpreting 2-3 sentences including high-register and medically-complex concepts in both languages (Examples: Genetic testing, allergy testing, blood transfusion reactions, etc).\*
8. Demonstrate critical-thinking and decision-making skills during interpretation of authentic simulation of ethical and challenging scenarios.\*
9. Demonstrate effective clarification protocol when communicating with providers and patients.
10. Demonstrate ability to switch from one mode of interpreting (consecutive to simultaneous or vice versa) into another more appropriate mode in order to adapt to the situation.\*



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#### IV. ROLES OF THE MEDICAL INTERPRETER

##### Learning Outcomes:

1. Discuss the four roles of the medical interpreter: Conduit, clarifier, culture broker, patient advocate.
2. Discuss the differences in knowledge and skills between a trained and an untrained interpreter using the guidelines from the IMIA standards, code of ethics, and roles of the interpreter.
3. Discuss the differences between translators and interpreters.
4. Demonstrate accuracy and fluency in interpreting medical information and patient responses of routine medical encounters using consecutive interpreting mode.
5. Analyze a provider-patient interaction and identify the most appropriate role in the interaction using the IMIA, NCIHC or CHIA standards and code of ethics for medical interpreters.\*
6. Prepare for professional practice by exploring different specialty areas, telephonic and video interpreting modes, and employment options.\*
7. Demonstrate professional consecutive interpreting skills by interpreting 2-3 sentences including high-register and medically-complex concepts in both languages, while demonstrating compliance with the Standards, the Ethics, and Roles of the Interpreter.\*
8. Discuss the role of the interpreter in patient safety and quality of care.\*
9. Self-evaluate own competencies related to translation and interpreting by comparing qualifications with national standards and expectations for professional translators and professional medical interpreters.\*

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#### FINAL SKILLS EVALUATION

##### Requirements for passing the Final Oral Skills Evaluation:

##### The candidate for graduation must be able to:

1. Demonstrate accuracy, fluency, comprehension and knowledge of medical terminology in both languages during the oral exam.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the standards, ethics, and roles of the interpreter during a simulated physician-patient-interpreter encounter.
3. Demonstrate consecutive interpreting skills in interpreting at least 2 sentences during a simulated routine physician-patient-interpreter encounter with accuracy and fluency.
4. Demonstrate clarification protocol and self-correction protocol without unduly interrupting the communication process.
5. Demonstrate fluency, accuracy and completeness in interpreting 2-3 sentences into the target language, including high-register and medically-complex concepts in both languages.\*
6. Demonstrate accurate interpretation/sight translation of one document from the source language into the target language.\*

\*Not included in the Basic40 Program. \*\* Basic40 and Fast Track Programs may have different requirements.



\*Not included in Basic40 Program. Consecutive interpreting skills are integrated into the other modules.

\*\* Basic40 and Healthcare Professionals Track may have different requirements.

\*\*\* Participants must be able to explain concepts, narrate and describe events, and state opinions without a lot of hesitations, filler statements, pauses, repetitions and self-corrections in both languages. Participants must be able to read and comprehend complex ideas, rephrase, and explain them accurately in their own words in both languages, and apply the concepts to real-life scenarios. Native language speakers must be able to understand participant's communication including pronunciation of non-medical terminology without having to ask for repetition or clarification. Participants may be referred for Language Coaching services or formal language proficiency testing if unable to demonstrate expected competencies. Additional fees may be required.

## FACULTY

Marlene Obermeyer, MA, RN,  
Director, Curriculum Developer, Instructor

Marlene is our director, curriculum designer and instructor for medical terminology and principles of medical interpreting. She has 30 years of experience as a registered nurse working in different specialties. She has designed over 100 contact hours of continuing education for nurses as a Kansas-approved continuing education provider. She is now an approved continuing education provider for RNs and LPNs in the state of California. She is committed to the highest standards for medical interpreters. Currently Chair of [Commission on Medical Interpreting Education \(CMIE\)](#), and chair of the [Minority Languages Division](#) of the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA). She is a member of the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA), the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC), and of the Texas Association of Healthcare Interpreters and Translators (TAHIT), as well as a member of the Kansas Association of Nursing Continuing Education Providers (KANCEP).

Marlene is the curriculum designer and presenter of the original IMIA Medical Terminology Boot Camp in 2010 and has been presenting the IMIA Medical Terminology Boot Camps annually, in addition to designing and presenting Advanced Boot Camps in Difficult Situations and Mental Health Interpreting.

Marlene received appreciation from the IMIA in January 2014 for her work as Chair of the CMIE Accreditation Commission.

Marlene and four of our mentors/instructors presented at the [International Conference of the IMIA in 2014](#).

Marlene is currently the Chair of the Minority Languages Division of the IMIA (2013-2015).

Marlene is currently the Chair of the Accreditation Commission (CMIE) of the IMIA (2014-2015).

Kelly Martinkus, MD, CMI-Spanish  
Senior Instructor

Manager of Program Development-Medical Division, Senior Medical , Mentor, Curriculum Developer

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Kelly studied medicine in the International Program at the Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara School of Medicine in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico where she received a bilingual, bicultural medical education. Having learned medicine in English and Spanish, Kelly is able to provide participants with a unique perspective of advanced medical terminology in both languages.

She is a member of the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) and is an advocate for language specific medical interpreter training.

Mentors:

For a list of our current mentors and instructors, please visit the Culture Advantage website [Mentor's Page](#).

Featured Graduates: For a list of our certified medical interpreter graduates, please visit [Graduates Page](#).

For more information on our programs, please contact us.

[director@cultureadvantage.org](mailto:director@cultureadvantage.org)

Patient-Centered, Provider-Managed, Interpreter-Facilitated Communication©

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