

# Assisting Migrants on the Move: Care-A-Van Acute Response Service (CARS)



A Collaborative Health Project between Off Track Health, Circle of Health International and Medical Relief International



**OFF TRACK HEALTH**

<http://www.offtrackhealth.org/>



**CIRCLE OF HEALTH  
INTERNATIONAL**

<http://www.cohintl.org/>



**MEDICAL RELIEF  
INTERNATIONAL (MRI)**

<http://www.medicalrelief.org/>

# Project Summary

## *Facts:*

- Throughout 2015, over half a million refugees from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and surrounding regions arrived on the shores of Lesvos, Greece.
- On November 18th 2015, the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, implemented stricter border crossing limitations, significantly increasing the number of stranded and displaced peoples
- This year in the month of January 2016, the UNHCR documents more than 36,000 arrivals.
- Upto the 9<sup>th</sup> of February, 2016 there have already been 8287 new arrivals (eight times more than the total arriving in the same month last year)
- The UNHCR has received 21% of its desired funding to manage this crisis.
- There are plenty of gaps in the existing services currently being bridged by NGOs and volunteer organisations particularly in relation to timing of medical care provided and its location.

## *The crisis*

With no immediate end in sight, this influx marks the worst refugee crisis since World War II. As nations, wrestle with the short and long term impact of this massive migration; creative, efficient, and fiscally responsible ways to meet refugees needs remains elusive. Current solutions are based on static, traditional models of care – the establishment of centralized registration centers, holding camps, and health clinics. The obvious problem is that ports of entry are in flux, border restrictions for the many countries involved vary, and the conditions of countries from which refugees are fleeing are ever-changing. Because of this, key support services such as primary first aid, psychosocial support, maternal and female reproductive health care, informational guidance, and sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) assistance have suffered. Women, children and other vulnerable people are obliged to hurry along at any expense to keep up with other family members or friends whom they are dependant on for support choosing to ignore their failing health in order to reach their destination more quickly.

## *Local policy*

Last week, a government led pilot project of dinghy boat interception and retrieval by the Hellenic Coast Guard appears to be having a beneficial effect on the island of Lesvos, by ensuring that the migrants are rescued safely and the process of registration is started on these larger vessels. This means that potentially the static camp at Moria and many others on Lesvos, will be used in the way that it was meant to be- simply as a transit camp. Migrants will pass through here even more quickly making the need to follow them along their route even greater.

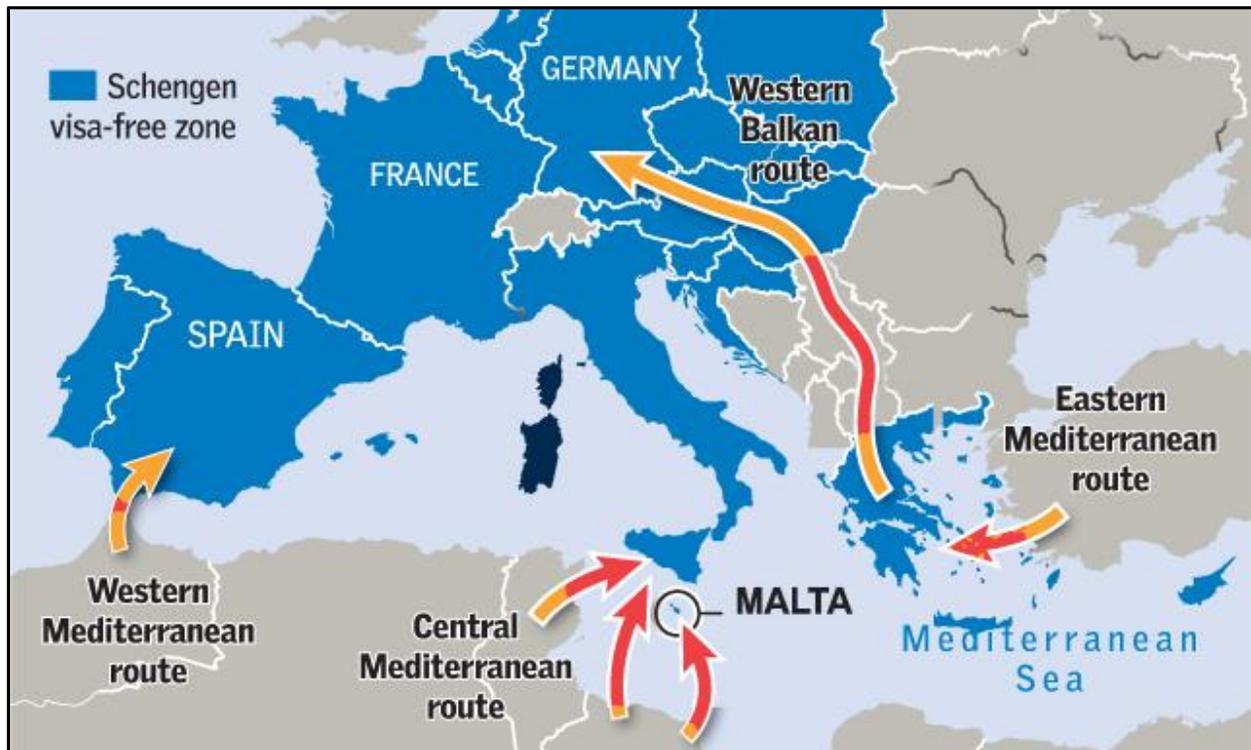


*A solution*

In efforts to provide better care for these vulnerable groups in transition, the proposal is to provide care in the areas of greatest patient need using a mobile clinical unit. The Care-A-Van Acute Response Service (CARS) is a versatile, multi-disciplinary approach for engaging with at risk populations that are both dispersed and nomadic. Utilizing a medically outfitted vehicle and a team of interpreters, physicians, midwives, nurses and paramedics, this program will seek to fill major gaps in the humanitarian support network by delivering basic health care directly to patients on the ground throughout the island with the versatility to move to other areas in Greece. Services provided can include and are not limited to: psychological health triage and referral, prenatal and postnatal care, birth delivery assistance, primary first aid, conducting needs assessments, mobile communications, uniting separated parties and human trafficking defence.

*Location*

Due to familiarity, the team plans to establish services in Lesvos in preparation for deployment further up into the borders of Athens and the Balkan passage. One of the key benefits of this program will be its capability for flexibility: CARS can work at any place, during any time. Whether running at a large or small scale, it will have the potential to assist populations in potentially remote and neglected areas.



# Organizational Background

## Off Track Health (OTH):

### Background and Contributions

Off Track Health (OTH) has solely dedicated itself to serving and protecting the needs of incoming migrants to Europe from the Middle East. Together, with the help of skilled physicians and medical personnel, we aim to provide medical aid in the refugee crisis and regions affected by crisis. The organization's overriding mission is to assist and support those fleeing from war and persecutions in a medical and psychosocial capacity; whilst also providing shelter and food through our extensive network of partners on the ground. OTH has been a primary contributor to the humanitarian support effort within the island of Lesbos, Greece throughout 2015.



Off Track Health will take the lead in maintaining vehicles and hardware, cooperating with local groups and managing the logistics and coordination of supplies, assets, and volunteers on the ground.

## Circle of Health International (COHI):

### Background and Contributions

Circle of Health International (COHI) is an American based international humanitarian organization founded in 2004 with the mission to work with women and their communities in times of crisis and disaster to ensure access to quality reproductive, maternal and newborn care. COHI has responded to 18 humanitarian emergencies and served over three million women, both domestically and internationally. COHI has worked alongside midwives and public health professionals in post-tsunami Sri Lanka, post-hurricane Louisiana, Tibet, Tanzania, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, tornado-affected Oklahoma, the Philippines, Sudan, Haiti and Afghanistan.



All of COHI's midwife volunteers must have the following qualifications:

- Licensed Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM) or Certified Professional Midwife (CPM)
- 6 months of professional experience in a humanitarian emergency context
- Training in SGBV
- EMT training
- Lactation support training
- Completion of online trainings: Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP), COHI's cultural competency module, and vicarious trauma
- Availability- 1 to 2 months
- Experience with leading rapid health assessments
- Experience managing high-risk pregnancies and complicated deliveries
- Experience with antenatal and postnatal care
- Experience managing preeclampsia/eclampsia
- Experience using a partogram
- Experience with family planning and mother-child health care
- Advance Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO) course

COHI will support CARS by providing medical supplies, networking support, community outreach, and a consistent flow of versatile midwife + nurse volunteers who are capable of delivering prenatal care, psychological first aid, secondary trauma support, and child delivery assistance.

## Medical Relief International (MRI):

### Background and Contributions

Medical Relief International (*MRI*) is a UK-registered charity specializing in medical aid distribution, treatment and disability support provision worldwide. MRI works to assist high-risk vulnerable populations with a special focus on the plight of women and children in poverty. With vulnerable women and impoverished children often becoming the chief victims of war and conflicts across the globe, MRI tries to bring out the best in every woman and child inflicted by hardship. In regards to the recent refugee crisis, Medical Relief International has contributed to the support effort by providing essential supplies and services to the Bab Al Hawa Hospital and other on-the-ground organizations and agencies.



For this project, MRI will be contributing a qualified field agent - Nathan Scott-Johnston- to oversee operations on the ground over the long term. Nathan will be essential in maintaining balance and coordination amongst the CARS team.



# Key Staffing Roles

## **Medical Director**

**Siyana Shaffi MD**

Siyana is an Arabic speaking UK licensed general practitioner and humanitarian doctor who has been working in the notorious 'police detention' camp of Moria, Lesvos. Siyana is renowned for her calm disposition despite horrendous working conditions during the peak of the refugee influx in October when the total number of arrivals was over 135 thousand people. She has been particularly passionate about the care of vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women and children.

During her time there she has helped found collaborative networks with existing medical services on the ground (governmental and non-governmental) and participated in the development and running of the 'Moria Medical Centre', a static medical facility in the tented shelters in the olive groves of Moria.

As well as taking a lead in the selection and verification process of new medical personnel, she will also be responsible for mentoring all staff, supporting staff training and their wellbeing on and off site. In collaboration with medical advisors from COHI, OTH, and MRI, she will be responsible for the development and maintenance of medical protocols based on WHO guidelines.

Having worked closely with all members of this project, Siyana's invaluable experience on the ground over the last five months and over 20 years of general clinical experience will provide the confident leadership for this project.



## **Lead Field Team Coordinator**

**Nathan Scott-Johnston**

Nathan's background and experience is in emergency medicine in the UK. Nathan worked on a project to deliver medical cover and facilities in refugee camps in Calais and Dunkirk, France to bridge the gaps left by the existing medical providers. This grew from treating patients from the back of a vehicle with a nurse colleague into providing medical care to an average of 100-150 patients per day from three treatment units that were sourced through his work with a UK based charity. During his time there he was able to forge links that enabled a better approach to preventative health care and to build strong relationships with local charities. Nathan has supported various organisations to facilitate medical cover in the transit camp of Moria based in Lesvos since late October 2015. Due to his assured continued presence in Greece, Nathan is well suited to serve in this role. He will manage and assist all of the clinical volunteers on the ground, handle situations in real time, and relay information back to medical director.



## **Volunteer Operations Director**

**Rebecca Johnson**

Rebecca Johnson became a volunteer in Lesvos, Greece in November 2015. Currently, she is the Volunteer Medical Coordinator for Off Track Health based at Camp Moria. She recruits, orients and schedules the doctors, nurses, paramedics and EMTs from around the world so that they can be effective in offering care to the thousands of refugees arriving in Greece. Working with 50 potential volunteers a week, she discerns those who are able to make the journey and work within an ever changing environment to offer medical services. Prior to her work at Off Track Health, she organized and led a daily volunteer orientation on the north shore. In her career, Rebecca specializes in organizational development and fundraising. For two years she was the Managing Director of the VITAS Hospice Charitable Fund. She trained medical staff in 13 offices, was the liaison to bereaved families, created internal and external communication tools, and made grants to indigent patients for their end of life requests. Before her work with hospice she was Vice President and Director of Community Relations for TotalBank in Miami, Florida.



Rebecca will oversee the logistics and resources of all incoming Care-A-Van volunteers. Her duties will include vetting, orienting, and directing new volunteers on their duties and roles within CARS, overseeing the exit process and all self-assessment updates throughout the program's duration, and managing the program's finances and received donations.

## **Protections Officer**

**Lucas Pastorfield-Li**

Lucas is the Maternal and Child Health Humanitarian Response Officer with COHI. During his time in Fonds-Parisien, Haiti, Lucas assisted in administering the Christ Pour Tous Hospital where he oversaw the reorganization effort of the facility's medical supply depot as well as conducted an urgent needs assessments amongst the villagers of an impoverished and isolated village across Lake Azuei. In Lesvos, Greece, he currently manages all of COHI's volunteer placement opportunities within the region. Overall, Lucas' skills apply to building meaningful connections amongst groups and individuals, creating lasting and effective systems of operation, and locating the path of least resistance within a cultural, political, and fiscal framework.



Lucas will be working in and out of country to promote the safety and protection of vulnerable populations on behalf of COHI's sexual & gender based violence (SGBV) prevention effort. His duties for the Care-A-Van program will include creating SGBV protocols for all refugee responders to utilize, coordinating and briefing COHI's volunteer cohort, locating and delivering key medical supplies, as well as serving as the liaison between COHI and CARS.



# Services Provided

## Prenatal Care + Birthing Assistance

- COHI's midwife volunteers will identify, engage, and assess pregnant women in transit. Depending on their stage of pregnancy, we will either provide prenatal care along with an at-home birthing kit for future use (in case clinical access is not available) or if labor appears imminent, we will urge the individual to temporarily pause their journey so we can safely assist the birth.

## Information Sharing + Communication Access

- Since many migrants lack Wi-Fi and/or cell service access along their routes, communication and information sharing is greatly limited for them. Our vehicle/s will all come equipped with a mobile hotspot for refugees to tap into when nearby. Additionally, our team will distribute maps and inform migrants of upcoming obstacles and potential hazards.



## Triage and Referral

- Relying on CAR's relations with local clinics, hospitals and fellow humanitarian organizations, our team will provide a preliminary assessment of all our beneficiaries' needs followed by a referral to nearby services that are better equipped to assist the patient.

## Psychological First Aid + Secondary Trauma Support

- Cases of psychological trauma for both migrants and volunteers have been all too common during this crisis. The Care-A-Van team will be providing psychosocial support services for both of these parties and referring escalated cases to mental health professionals.

## Breastfeeding Support

- For the thousands of pregnant or nursing mothers along the route, breastfeeding is a far more efficient and sustainable method of feeding one's child. Contrary to popular misconceptions, breastfeeding is not instinctively learned by all mothers which is why our team will be available to instruct these individuals on how to properly breastfeed their babies on the road.



## Safe Space Access

- Many women and children report that they stopped eating and drinking in order to avoid having to use toilets where they felt unsafe. For those especially in need of safe spaces from SGBV, we will provide an outdoor tent space for some long needed privacy and later arrange accommodations for them among trusted agencies and organizations who provide longer term safe spaces.



# Program Goals and Objectives

## 1 - Organizing Recruited Volunteers

COHI and OTH will work in tandem to vet, enlist, and organize a team of medical volunteers from their pre-existing databases to service the Care-A-Van project. These teams will vary in outline, but will in most cases consist of: three doctors, two mid-level providers (midwives and nurses), one paramedic and two interpreters. As a part of our screening process, first time volunteers will be interviewed via Skype. This allows Off Track and COHI to assess a volunteer's readiness for the work ahead, to get insight into a candidate's most likely reaction(s) in a high stress environment, delve deeper into the options available for both long-term and short-term volunteering, and also provide an opportunity for volunteers to get insight from experienced professionals who have worked in the field and can give first hand advice.

## 2 - Preparing the Vehicle

Care-a-van will be equipped to provide a multifunctional space capable of transforming to fit the needs of services used. It will be kitted out to a high standard with special attention paid to infection control; creating a safe and ergonomic work area. This will aid high quality delivery of service. Infection control protocols will be met by use of washable surfaces, a pump sink for hand washing, and implantation of waste management systems. Internal lighting and power sources will be provided by auxiliary battery units, supplemented by eco-friendly solar panels. Specialized external flood lights constitute an invaluable lighting source at night or in foul weather. An integrated mounting area for medical equipment with inbuilt storage containers for consumables will create a practical work environment. Bench seating will double as an examination couch for patients if needed. Where possible, items will be sourced from Greek based suppliers and local labor will be utilized with the aim of supporting both the national and island's economy.

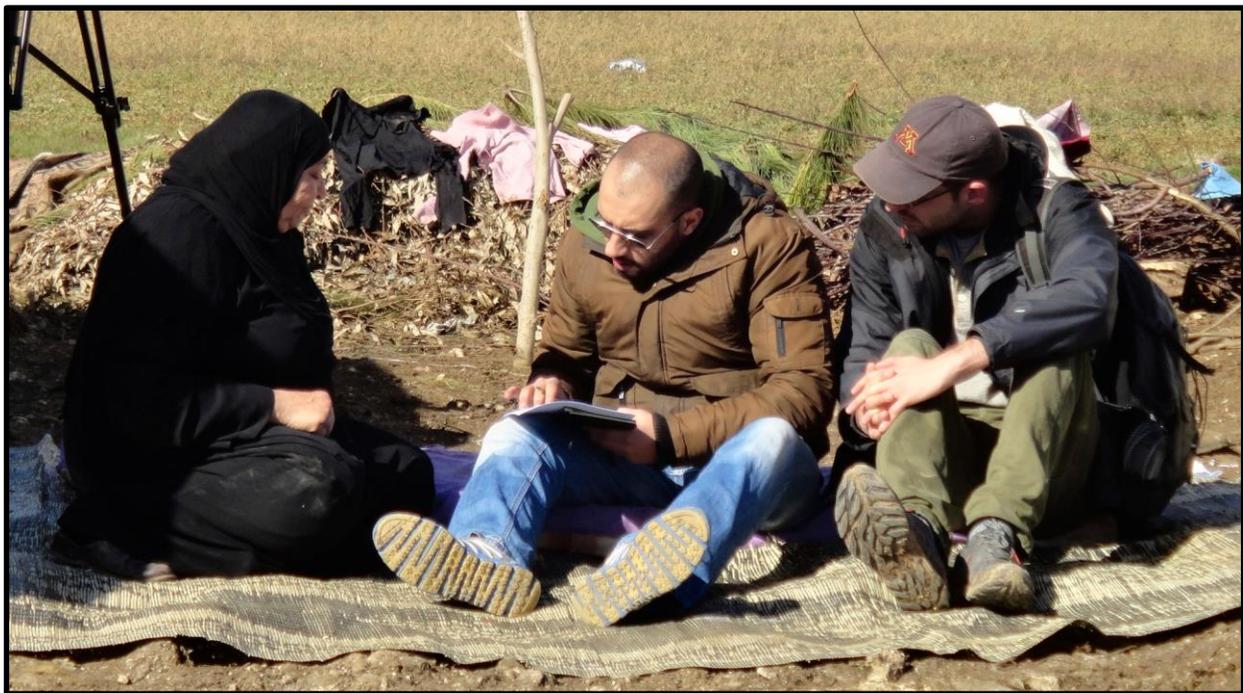


### 3 - Pod Deployment

Once the teams and vehicle/s have been assembled and properly cleared by local and international authorities, they will be ready for deployment. A team lead will be assigned on all deployments (in most cases the most senior Doctor,) and will be collectively managed by the volunteer operations director who will be present on the ground during the entire deployment, ready to respond to the needs of the group. These “pods” will follow a predetermined program that consists of mobile outreach, opening or joining the rotation of an already functioning organization who may be at a deficit for manpower. (i.e. Lighthouse, Boat Refugee Foundation). The primary focus of each deployment will go into delivering quality prenatal, psychosocial, triage, information sharing, and first aid support services to marginalized migrants on the move.

### 4 - Assessing Progress

In order to track the impact of the CARS program, our team will conduct a quarterly progress assessment. This assessment will draw from data which has been collected and recorded throughout the deployment process. Figures such as number of beneficiaries medically served, number of miles traveled, amount of supplies distributed, number of beneficiaries trained or instructed, and number of births assisted, etc. will go into these assessments. Having this information will help CARS shape and pursue realistic goals in response to the shifting levels of migrants entering Europe’s borders.



# Projected Timetable

Target Date:	Goal to be Reached:
March 1, 2016	Full funding from all interested parties is obtained
March 8, 2016	Vehicle has been chosen and purchased
March 16, 2016	Field team has been selected and briefed
March 21, 2016	Vehicle is completely renovated and prepared for service
March 23, 2016	Team and Vehicle have been registered with all relevant parties
March 25, 2016	Orientation is completed + First team deployment
April 30, 2016	First 500 migrants have been assisted
May 30, 2016	First 2000 migrants have been assisted
June 1, 2016	First quarterly self-assessment will be available
June 3, 2016	Care has expanded from Lesbos onto mainland Greece + Europe



## Proposed Budget

Items Needed	Individual Cost	Quantity Needed Per Month	First Month's Start-up Cost	Ensuing Monthly Cost
<b>Type A: Vehicle</b>				
Van/Shuttle Buy + reg. + insurance	€10,000	1 Van	€10,000	€400
Fuel	€60/per tank	12 tanks	€720	€720
Refrigerator	€1,400	1	€1,400	€100
Lighting (ext. flood /examination)	€25	10	€250	€25
Space Heaters	€130	4	€520	€25
Fans (for Cooling + Ventilation)	€60	6	€360	€100
Examining couch	€2,000	1	€2,000	€100
Solar Reflection Panel	€630	2	€1,260	€300
Renovation + Installation	€3,000	1	€3,000	€400
Invertor - For electrical appliances	€400	1	€480	€50
Cell Service Plan	€50/per month	3	€150	€150
Mobile Hotspot	€50	2	€100	€80
Outdoor Distribution Tent	€603	1	€603	€20
Scoop Stretcher + Straps	€550	1	€550	€30
Contingencies	unknown	unknown	€2,000	€2,000
<b>Subtotals:</b>			<b>23,393</b>	<b>4,500</b>
<b>Type B: Staffing</b>				
Airfares from US	€1,500	2 providers	€3,000	€3,000
Airfares from UK	€300	4 providers	€1,200	€1,200
Occupational Health Screening	€80	10	€800	€0
Housing (Rent incl bills)	€900	2 houses	€900	€900
Lead Field Team Coordinator Salary	€2,000	1	€2,000	€2,000
Medical Director Salary	€2,000	1	€2,000	€2,000
Volunteer Operations Director Salary	€2,000	1	€2,000	€2,000
Translator Salary + Subsistence	€1,100	2	€2,200	€2,000
Midwife Salary + Subsistence	€2,000	2	€4,000	€4,000
<b>Subtotals:</b>			<b>€22,400</b>	<b>€21,100</b>
<b>Type C: Supplies</b>				
Food/Nutrition eg water/ snacks	€35	31	€1,085	€1,085
Medical Equipment (In addition to current stock)	€10	31	€100	€250
Medications (In addition to current stock)	€15	31	€100	€300
Clinical Waste Disposal (per bag)	€30	20	€0	€600
<b>Subtotals:</b>			<b>€5,885</b>	<b>€2,235</b>
			<b>First Month's Total: €51,378</b>	<b>Gross Monthly Total: €27,835</b>



## Concluding Remarks

As of now, CARS already has several of the necessary pieces in line to begin deployment. Both OFT and COHI have access to the medical supplies and medications that will be needed to serve the diverse health needs of our beneficiaries. In addition to the core staffing team that has been assembled, CARS will be able to draw from OFT and COHI's vast database of nurses, midwives, physicians, and paramedics; many of whom are either already on the ground or on route. The attached budget highlights all remaining funding and support needed to get our teams on the road. All requested funding will go toward: purchasing + outfitting the vehicle and supporting our team's living, travel, and earnings expenses. Moreover, this budget will ensure a certain level of quality among our crew, equipment, and vehicle that will be paramount in serving a population with such fluid and ever-changing needs as those coming into Europe from the Middle East.



It is very difficult to discern how Europe's current refugee crisis will present itself in a few months, let alone a few weeks. Coordination efforts on behalf of some of the largest humanitarian agencies and organizations have been stifled by the unpredictable nature of this catastrophe. For now, all that is certain is that the living conditions of millions of migrants on the road will remain desperate in the foreseeable future. That is what makes this juncture so critical in mobilizing a flexible, multi-faceted response to an issue that refuses to stay still. As summer approaches and the seas soften, the increased number of vulnerable refugees crossing the frontier will break the current support threshold. Help us get behind the wheel before that happens.



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