

Clinical trials, innovative diagnostic techniques - What's new in BCI research

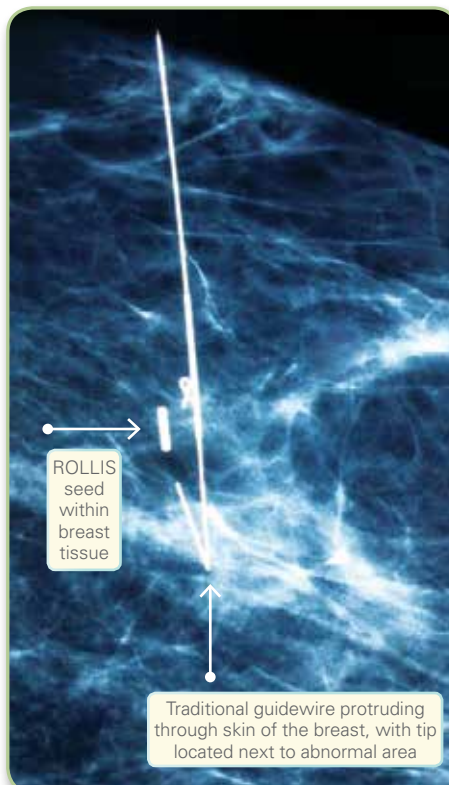
Westmead Breast Cancer Institute (BCI) has a strong commitment to research to ensure the delivery of high quality patient care and our clinicians at BCI are committed to undertake research appropriate to our patient's needs.

In recent years, BCI has extended their working partnership with national and international organisations to offer new drugs and innovative diagnostic techniques to our patients. At BCI we recognise our patients can gain access to new treatments before they are widely available, by participating in various types of research trials. Over the last few years the number of clinical trials being offered through BCI has



Tiny ROLLIS seeds are easily placed in the breast tissue under image guidance. This enables the surgeon to find lesions that cannot be felt at surgery, using a probe that detects minute levels of radiation.

increased. One ideal scenario for clinical trials is during neoadjuvant systemic therapy, which is when chemotherapy (or other systemic therapy) is given to patients before surgery. The benefits of this approach includes the possibility to reduce the tumour size prior to surgery and make breast conserving surgery easier but it also gives the possibility to test how well new drugs work. As this approach is becoming more common, BCI has successfully gained participation in international trials, and where suitable

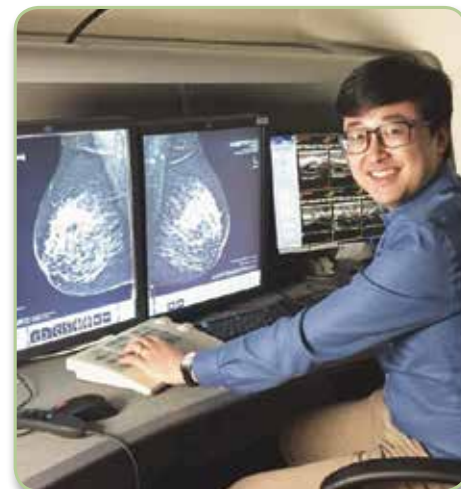


BCI breast cancer patients are eligible to receive new drugs as neoadjuvant therapy as part of a clinical trial.

Our clinicians continue to introduce innovative surgical and diagnostic techniques. Last year at BCI we commenced a new study for localisation of impalpable breast lesions. If the breast cancer lesion is unable to be felt prior to surgery (impalpable), a localisation procedure is undertaken using a guidewire to help guide the surgeon to remove the correct area in the breast. In this new study, instead of using a guidewire to localise the lesion, the radiologist inserts a very low dose radioactive I-125 seed into the abnormal area. During surgery, the surgeon uses a hand held probe to detect the radioactive signal produced by the seed. The seed and the abnormal area will then be removed. This new

study is called 'ROLLIS', which stands for Radioguided Occult Lesion Localisation using low activity Iodine 125 seeds.

This alternative method of marking breast lesions has been used overseas for a number of years and is standard practice at the Mayo Clinic. The Royal Perth and Sir Charles Gardiner Hospitals were the first centres to introduce this technique in Australia. They have already performed a successful preliminary study during which participants had a seed inserted as well as a guidewire. The study showed that the use of the radioactive seed technique was safe and effective. Using a radioactive seed rather than a guidewire has many advantages, including being able to insert



Radiologist Kelvin Ho

the seed as an outpatient procedure up to 8 days before surgery and it is often more comfortable for the patient. It can also make the surgery easier and faster to perform with a better chance of removing all the lesion in one operation. Before we change our standard clinical procedures in Australia, it is important to conduct a large trial to confirm these results.

Westmead Breast Cancer Institute is one of the first places in NSW offering this study to breast cancer patients.

A Note from Nirmala

Dear friends and supporters of Westmead BCI,

Thank you for your support over the last year (and beyond), as another year passes and we are well on the way into 2018. Breast cancer continues to have a significant impact on our community, and it is staggering to think that in this year alone 18,235 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed in our nation (including 148 cases in men). Around the world and in Australia we are working hard to combat this disease and the five year survival rate for breast cancer now stands at over 90%. In women, breast cancer continues to be the most common cancer diagnosed, accounting for 28% of all cancers diagnosed. It is estimated that 3,128 women will die from breast cancer in 2018. These Cancer Australia statistics are extremely sobering, and a reminder that there is still much work to be done for women with breast cancer in our community. At BCI we are committed to continuously re-evaluating how we do things to strive for continuous improvements and standards of excellence in all we do.

As I sit in one of our breast cancer multidisciplinary meetings every morning, I feel enormously proud and privileged to work amongst such dedicated, intelligent and talented individuals, working together as a cohesive team to consider each patient and work through the best possible treatment pathway. As a pathologist myself, at the microscopic level, I see that breast cancer is an incredibly variable disease, with so very many subtypes and variations on these subtypes. As the director of a busy breast unit I also see how incredibly complex things have become in terms



of treatment options and pathways for our patients. I have spoken with many patients over the last several months and they too have shared with me how complex things can be, and are grateful to the BCI for helping them with their individual patient journey.

2017 saw a number of innovative developments: BCI successfully launching a new electronic medical record breast cancer module (Breast Cancer eMR), an innovative tool which enables real time/ bedside data capture. This module was developed by our own clinicians and creates the ability to view and share patient medical information across all NSW health facilities where Cerner Millennium is used where a patient is being treated. It also saw the launch of a 'multi-gene test' research project the 'Prosper Study' which supports our BCI multidisciplinary teams in making the decisions about the future treatment plans for our patients. The research is looking at how the results of this test affect the decisions made by the team regarding chemotherapy and

endocrine therapy for breast cancer patients.

So what does 2018 hold in store for the BCI? We have set our sights on building a strong and comprehensive research program in collaboration with the Westmead Institute for Medical Research (WIMR). This program will incorporate research in the form of clinical trials and other clinical research utilising our existing clinical database, and in collaboration with WIMR we are enhancing and growing our program of translational research. Translational research is the type of research that examines how findings in the research laboratory are developed into tools and treatments that can be used in the clinic. This is a very important aspect of research that encourages innovation and strives to ensure we are using the best and latest techniques in the treatment of all patients. An important aspect of this breast cancer research initiative will be to primarily address real life clinical issues we face in our clinics every day and to search for accessible and meaningful solutions to manage them. This issue of Venus contains an article on the benefits of clinical trials and is a tribute to patients who have participated, helping us develop the best treatment approaches for patients.

Finally I would like to acknowledge all our supporters without whom we would be unable to progress many of the initiatives we aspire to. Most importantly I would like to thank our patients and their carers for continuing to place their faith in us and inspiring us to keep raising the bar in all we do.

A/Prof Nirmala Pathmanathan
Service Director
Westmead Breast Cancer Institute

Sydney Pink Ribbon Motorcycle Ride



will be held on
Sunday 14th October,
at the Ettamogah Hotel,
Kellyville.

For more details visit
www.pinkribbonride.com



My Story: Deborah Wrigley

In August 2015, after a routine mammogram, I was diagnosed with early stage breast cancer and was given a good prognosis requiring a small procedure and a short course of radiotherapy.

However, at my surgical follow up, I was informed that I had a type of breast cancer known as Invasive Lobular Cancer, and that it was 'uncontained' and heading towards my chest wall. This required more surgery in the form of a mastectomy and lymph nodes dissection, nine months of chemo and radiotherapy, followed by daily medication for the next 5-10 years.

I don't even remember getting back to my car after hearing this news. I was numb, emotional and in disbelief that this was happening to me, but at the same time, knew that I was going to get through this with the love and support of family and friends, and so my journey began.

I met many amazing people following the same path who inspired and touched me with their strength and courage. I am also very much indebted to the dedicated medical team at Westmead Breast Cancer Institute and for the wonderful follow up support that the Cancer Council provides through their information booklets and services.



I finished treatment in July 2016 and whilst elated, I also found it daunting at the same time. When you are in treatment, you focus on dealing with the day by day routine and managing the various side effects. After that stops, you feel alone, uncertain and unsure on how you are going to pick up the pieces of your life. You know that you are different, and that things will never be the same and it is a big adjustment to recognise that this is the 'new norm'.

Touching on this 'new norm', I soon discovered that the common side effect of 'chemo fog' had improved to a point, but that I still struggle now and then with memory loss, word finding and multi-tasking - this is especially evident when I'm tired, stressed or unwell.

I am now part of a research group looking at cognitive impairment in post

chemotherapy patients which I have found not only empowering in a way of 'giving back', but also useful in learning to manage my own side effects, and knowing when to take timeout, rest and recovery.

Having said that, I am so blessed and grateful for a second chance here on the beautiful NSW south coast where I am regaining my life, step by step, one day at a time.

If you, a friend, or family member would like more information about cognitive impairment after chemotherapy (also known as 'chemo brain'), the Cancer Council produces a fact sheet titled "Understanding changes in thinking and memory". Please visit www.cancer.org.au/about-cancer/publications.html and click on 'Cancer brain' to access the fact sheet.

2018 Annual Breakfast

The Westmead Breast Cancer Institute Annual Breakfast will be held on Saturday 27th October at the Waterview, Bicentennial Park in Sydney Olympic Park.

Tickets will go on sale 13th August 2018 and can be purchased online at www.trybooking.com/VTDF or by calling 8890 9481.



BCI pioneering surgical wound care technique

Breast reconstruction using implants has made a huge difference to the lives of women with breast cancer. But one of the biggest problems is an infection of the breast implants also known as 'peri-prosthetic' infection. These may occasionally be severe and pose a major challenge for breast surgeons to manage. In addition, such infections can interfere with other breast cancer treatments that are also required such as radiation or chemotherapy.

In the past when infections were severe, the breast surgeons would have no option but to remove the breast implant and perform a delayed breast reconstruction once the infection was treated and after other treatments were complete. Reconstruction as a delayed procedure following such an infection can be more challenging surgically and may not provide as optimal a cosmetic result. It is well known that poor cosmetic results are associated with significant psychological distress for patients, so finding a safe and effective way to treat



these infections without sacrificing the implant is important to try and achieve.

The surgeons at the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute have pioneered a novel

technique to manage such infections using the cutting-edge technology of an advanced wound care system called 'VeraFlo'. This new method can eradicate infections in the shortest possible time, optimising the breast tissue to accept the new implant without complications. This technique takes 7-10 days and is an intensive treatment which involves the use of negative pressure to circulate fluid containing wound cleansers and antibiotics, around the breast tissue to effectively treat the infection and promote healing of the tissue.

This pioneering technique developed by the surgeons at BCI has been showcased around the world at leading breast cancer conferences and is now adopted internationally and around Australia as a safe and effective way to manage implant infections. Westmead Breast Cancer Institute, through our focus on research, continues to lead the way with innovative practices that are focussed on improving the outcomes for breast cancer patients.

Mini Field of Women 2018



On Thursday 4th October 2018, Westmead Breast Cancer Institute will hold its annual Mini Field of Women. One hundred pink ladies and one blue man silhouette will be on display, with people affected by breast cancer, their family and friends invited to share a message of support to place on each silhouette.

This event runs as part of our regular Best Breast Friends support group.

**BCI Mini Field of Women
4th October 2018
10.30am – 12pm**

To RSVP or for more information, contact BCI-supportservicesinfo@health.nsw.gov.au or call 8890 9481.



Staff Profile: Sou Helmey, Marketing and Recruitment Coordinator

I completed a bachelor's degree in medical science at the University of Sydney in 1998 and at the age of 20, the year 1999 came along with endless possibilities. Did I want to pursue further studies in neuroscience, heart and circulation or optometry?

Many of my friends went on to complete their honours in their chosen field of science, some went on to do medicine, and others went left field to pursue a career in commerce and politics. Instead, I chose to get married and move out of home. It was then I quickly realised I needed decent employment beyond the scope of what 'The Cookie Man' could offer me if I were to supplement our livelihood adequately. A week later, I gained employment at an anatomical pathology lab in Sydney.

Eighteen months into the role I knew being a scientific officer wasn't for me. Whilst specimen imaging was fun, histological staining was mundane. Also, every time I would look through a microscope I would see a swarm of pink and purple and decipher nothing. I needed something better aligned to my skills and interests and so I became the operations coordinator for a distributor of medical diagnostic kits.

Once I mastered our little world of inventory, order processing, international freight and customs clearance I was yearning for something else and so I became a mum and a fulltime carer of our little family. I had 8 blissful years at home with my 2 boys during which time I completed my master's in business marketing at Western Sydney University quite simply because it interested me.

The time then came for me to re-enter the workforce and so began my foray in the Not-for-Profit industry. For 6 years I worked across sport and disability,

international development and social services diversifying my skills in marketing/communication, volunteer management and service delivery until a wonderful opportunity came along for me to join the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute (BCI) in 2016.

I took on the role of Marketing and Recruitment Coordinator for BCI where I am tasked with promoting the BreastScreen NSW service in Sydney's West and recruiting eligible ladies to screening mammography for the early



detection of breast cancer. I finally found my calling! A place where I am able to fuse my tertiary knowledge and bring it to the fore. A place where I can utilise and further build on the skills I acquired working in community and health organisations. A place where I can indulge my passion for health and well-being, for wanting to improve the lives of people impacted by cancer, right in the heart of the only world I've ever known – western Sydney.

What a journey it has been. Who knew promoting a free, life-saving, readily accessible service could be so challenging! Less than 1 in 2 women in the target age range are prompt with

their 2 yearly screening mammograms. When you consider an eligible population of 160,000 ladies (50-74 years of age) in western Sydney, you effectively have 80,000 ladies that are disengaged – my mother being one of them!

With a culturally diverse population, varying degrees of socio-economic demographics, newly arrived migrants and lower levels of health literacy, it became evident that we need to overcome barriers to screening amongst our target audience in western Sydney if we are to achieve a participation rate greater than 50%. It's important to do so when you consider that 1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer in their life time. And so begins my outreach to government and non-government entities to implement targeted interventions for the engagement of lapsed and non-screeners, culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal communities in an attempt to bridge the gap in participation in screening.

I've been fortunate to find a supportive network of colleagues to assist my journey. Within BCI, the local health districts and the greater BreastScreen NSW network – across all my functions – from mobilising the service to new venues, overseeing recruitment and promotional activities, facilitating presentations and engagements for breast screening, coordinating group bookings for screening and sharing stories. We've covered a lot of territory but we still have a long way to go.

Ultimately I want to enhance the BreastScreen experience for ladies. I want to encourage continued engagement and a return to rescreening, so that we can effectively reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with the complications of advanced breast cancer. Not just for the greater community in western Sydney but also for my mother.

Overcoming language barriers for breast cancer screening in Western Sydney

In celebration and recognition of cultural diversity in western Sydney, the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute (BCI) through its BreastScreen NSW (Sydney West) program commenced a special project this year to encourage culturally and linguistically diverse women to return to routine mammography screening for the early detection of breast cancer.

We know that finding breast cancer in its early stages can save lives.

However, it is this demographic who typically have lower rates of participation in the BreastScreen NSW program. By seeking to speak to women in their language, it is hoped they can be re-engaged and turn this statistic around.

Screening mammograms are the most effective way of detecting breast cancer early. With early detection you have more treatment options available and a greater chance of survival from this disease.

The project, in partnership with the Health Care Interpreter Service, will run in 2018 thanks to the funding awarded by the Cancer Institute NSW.

Qualified interpreters will be contacting women who have had a mammogram in the past but have not responded to follow up appointment reminders. Using



the interpreter service ensures we can talk to women in their native tongue to make them aware of the importance of having a mammogram every two years.

The project will reach out to 3000 lapsed women from Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Hindi, Italian and Maltese speaking populations to book for a screening mammogram. The project will run complimentary to the interpreter services already provided to women attending mammogram appointments at screening clinics across western Sydney.

Breast cancer remains the most common cancer among Australian women, with more than 17,000 diagnosed every year. That equates to 48 Australian women

receiving a breast cancer diagnosis every day!

1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime and 9 in 10 women diagnosed with breast cancer do not have a family history of the disease.

BreastScreen NSW provides FREE screening mammograms for women aged 50-74 years. The appointment for screening takes no more than 15 minutes, it's free and no doctor's referral is required.

Women are urged to make an appointment by phoning 13 20 50 or 13 14 50 if an interpreter is required (group bookings welcome).

BreastScreen NSW mammograms are free for women aged 50 years to 74 years

Based in Myer stores

- Myer Parramatta
- Myer Penrith
- Myer Castle Hill
- Myer Blacktown

Based in hospitals

- Auburn Hospital
- Mt Druitt Hospital
- Blue Mountains District ANZAC Memorial Hospital

Mobile Screening Vans

- Call 13 20 50 for current location



Call 13 20 50 to book your free mammogram.

- Free for women aged 50 - 74 years
- After-hours service at Myer sites
- Tell us if you have special needs, such as wheelchair access
- If you need an interpreter please phone 13 14 50

The BCI manages BreastScreen NSW Sydney West and has state of the art screening facilities in western Sydney. You can have a digital BreastScreen mammogram at a BCI Sunflower Clinic inside a Myer department store in western Sydney, or at one of the hospitals listed above.

Early detection of breast cancer saves lives
A digital mammogram only takes about 15 minutes.
Don't delay, book now.

Westmead Breast Cancer Institute
Level 1, Westmead Hospital
PO Box 143, Westmead NSW 2145
Phone: (02) 8890 6728 / Fax: (02) 8890 7246



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Farewell to Helen Dower - Breast Care Nurse

Last year, on Friday 27th October 2017 - my 74th birthday - I handed in my Hospital ID and uniforms, then walked away from Westmead Breast Cancer Institute for the last time.

Even though my retirement had been planned over the previous 12 months, it was still incredibly difficult to leave my work colleagues, hospital friends and the many courageous women I'd had the privilege to meet and support.

I commenced my nursing training in April 1960 as a very young, naïve 17 year old, straight from school, with no life skills or experience of traumas. My goal was to work in a nursing home.

Many career twists and turns later, in 1980 fate led me to Westmead hospital, which then became my second home.

Following my own diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer in 1990, I became a Volunteer Visitor with the Cancer Council and became fully aware of the enormity and ramifications of that disease.



Helen Dower at her farewell party

It is now 28 years since my initial diagnosis, but one day I may have the need to enter the BCI as a client.

I know that like all the other clients, I will be treated with respect, offered professional advice and surrounded with compassion.

So how could I just walk away from all that I loved?

My fellow colleagues, our clients and the countless number of people who used to stop me in the hospital corridors each day.

That feeling of hopefully making a difference.

I couldn't plead ill health as I retired with 1000 hours of accrued sick leave.

Too old? I certainly felt ancient when tackling complicated computer programs.

I retired for my family, who though supportive and sympathetic over the years, began to claim more and more of my time.

Someone wiser than me once said "you cannot serve two masters."

I never did work in a Nursing Home, but can honestly say that my career in nursing has given me far more than I could ever have hoped for on that first day so long ago.



In 2000 I joined BreastScreen Sydney West as a Nurse Counsellor.

I had finally found my passion, deciding to spend my final nursing years within this complex speciality.

When Prof. John Boyages incorporated BreastScreen Sydney West into the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute I had the opportunity for further training, which then allowed me to become a member of the dedicated BCI nursing team.

Together with the nursing, clinical and administrative staff my days were spent supporting women and their families through all stages of their breast cancer journeys.

We assisted women pre-diagnosis, post diagnosis, during planning and treatment, then follow up care - and every problem imaginable in between.

Whilst empathy became my mantra, practical support was equally important. Every day brought new challenges, many tears and frustrations, but also great joy and satisfaction.

We shared the joys of reaching that '5 year cancer free goal' and the tears when a BCI friend's journey ended.

I know BCI will continue to provide excellent service to all who walk through the doors and I am grateful for the years I spent as part of the team delivering that service.

You can make a difference.

We hope you have enjoyed reading our Venus Newsletter. As you will have seen, the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute (BCI) continues to provide expert care and quality services across all of our programs - screening, diagnosis, clinical treatment and support, research and education. This can only be achieved with the ongoing support we receive from you, our supporters, in addition to the funding we receive from government.

There are many ways you can help BCI provide continuing state of the art breast cancer services to the people of western Sydney. Over the last few years your generosity has enabled improved services for patients including timely onsite reading of pathology, refined less invasive sentinel node biopsy surgery and equipment to assist in the research and practice of oncoplastic surgical approaches.

Every day 48 women in Australia will receive a diagnosis of breast cancer. Given the aging population and population growth this number is set to increase. With your help and generosity, we at the BCI will continue to improve the breast cancer journey, and make a significant difference to the lives of women with breast cancer, their families and the community.

Please help us in our mission of "engaging with our community for early detection, diagnosis, support and treatment of people with breast cancer, today and everyday".

You can:

Make a donation

You can make a one-off or recurring donation by either:

1. Donating online at givenow.com.au/westmeadbci
Your tax deductible receipt will be issued immediately by email.
2. Using the donation form on the back of the address slip that came with Venus (it already contains your details and donor number), or using the donation form at the bottom of this page, and posting them back.
Your tax deductible receipt will be mailed to you.
3. Phoning 8890 8458 with your credit card details.

Fundraise for us

If you would like to fundraise on our behalf, either individually or through your business, community group or school, we'd love to hear from you. Before fundraising on our behalf you will need to read our Fundraising Guidelines and complete the Fundraising Agreement Form.

Give in Celebration

Making a donation to celebrate a special occasion or milestone is a great way to support the BCI. Ask your guests to donate to a cause rather than give presents. Tax deductible receipts can be organised for you.



BCI westmead breast cancer institute

Supporting People with Breast Cancer Today and Every Day

- Providing screening, diagnosis, treatment and care by expert teams
- With world-class research, education and innovation
- Engaging the help of our community and supporters
- To shine a Ray of Hope

Best Breast Friends

A chance to meet other women affected by breast cancer. Join us for a chat and listen to guest speakers present talks on various subjects including nutrition, menopause and exercise.

Session times:
First Tuesday of each month,
February - December
10:30am-12:00pm

Westmead BCI [Door 1]
Conference Room Level 1,
F Block Westmead Hospital

For more information call
8890 9682 or email
BCI-supportservicesinfo@health.nsw.gov.au

Supporting People with Breast Cancer Today and Every Day

If you received Venus by mail, a donor slip has been completed for your convenience on the reverse of your address slip. Please return it in the reply paid envelope supplied

I would like to support the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute's Fundraising Campaign by:

1. Donating online at www.givenow.com.au/westmeadbci
(A tax deductible receipt for donations over \$2 will be issued immediately via email.)
2. Completing the donation slip and posting in the reply paid envelope.
(A tax deductible receipt for donations over \$2 will be posted to you.)
3. Phoning 8890 8458 with your credit card details.

Enclosed is my donation of \$50 \$75 \$100 \$ _____

I would like to make a regular donation of \$ _____

monthly quarterly annually

I wish to pay by

Cheque / Money Order (made payable to the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute)

Debit from my card Visa Mastercard Bankcard Amex

Card No

Name on card _____

Expiry date / Signature _____

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

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Please complete and mail to:
Westmead Breast Cancer Institute
PO Box 143 Westmead NSW 2145

Thank you for sharing
our vision in Supporting
People with Breast Cancer
Today and Every Day



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