

National Health Service Act 2006

2006 CHAPTER 41

PART 6

OPHTHALMIC SERVICES

[^{F1}Duty of the Board in relation to primary ophthalmic services]

Textual Amendments

F1 S. 115 cross-heading substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 54(8); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

115 Primary ophthalmic services

- (1) [^{F2}The Board must exercise its powers so as to secure the provision throughout England] of the following primary ophthalmic services—
 - (a) the sight-testing service mentioned in subsection (2),
 - (b) such other primary ophthalmic services as may be prescribed, and
 - (c) to the extent that it considers necessary to meet all reasonable requirements, any further primary ophthalmic services.
- [^{F3}(1A) Arrangements made for the purposes of subsection (1) may include arrangements for the performance of a service outside England.]
 - (2) The sight-testing service mentioned in subsection (1)(a) is a service for testing the sight of all of the following persons (except any such testing which takes place in prescribed circumstances)—
 - (a) those aged under 16,
 - (b) those aged 16, 17 or 18 who are receiving qualifying full-time education,
 - (c) those whose resources must be treated in accordance with regulations as being less than or equal to their requirements,
 - (d) those aged 60 or over,

- (e) those of such other description as may be prescribed.
- (3) Regulations may—
 - (a) prescribe what "qualifying full-time education" is for the purposes of subsection (2)(b),
 - (b) make provision for the purposes of subsection (2)(c) about how a person's resources and requirements must be calculated.
- [^{F4}(4) The Board may (in addition to any other power conferred on it) make such arrangements for the provision of primary ophthalmic services as it considers appropriate; and it may, in particular, make contractual arrangements with any person.
- (4A) Arrangements made for the purposes of subsection (4) may include arrangements for the performance of a service outside England.]
 - (5) [^{F5}The Board] must publish information about such matters as may be prescribed in relation to the primary ophthalmic services provided under this Act.
- - (7) Regulations may provide that services of a prescribed description must, or must not, be regarded as primary ophthalmic services for the purposes of this Act (but these regulations may not affect the duty in subsection (1)(a)).
 - (8) Regulations under subsection (7) may in particular describe services by reference to the manner or circumstances in which they are provided.
 - (9) Regulations may provide that a person—
 - (a) whose sight is tested by a person who is a party to a general ophthalmic services contract, and
 - (b) who is shown during the testing or within a prescribed time after it to fall within any of paragraphs (a) to [^{F7}(e)] of subsection (2),

must be taken for the purposes of the testing to have so fallen immediately before his sight was tested.

- (10) In the case mentioned in subsection (9), the testing of his sight must (unless it took place in circumstances prescribed under subsection (2)) be treated as a testing under the sight-testing service mentioned in subsection (1)(a)—
 - (a) for the purposes of remuneration in respect of the testing, and
 - (b) for any such other purpose as may be prescribed.

Textual Amendments

- F2 Words in s. 115(1) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 54(2); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F3 S. 115(1A) inserted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para.
 54(3); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F4 S. 115(4)(4A) substituted for s. 115(4) (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4),
 Sch. 4 para. 54(4); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F5 Words in s. 115(5) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 54(5); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F6 S. 115(6) omitted (1.4.2013) by virtue of Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 54(6); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

Word in s. 115(9)(b) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 54(7); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

116 Regulations under section 115: supplementary

- (1) Regulations under section 115 which refer to an Act of Parliament or an instrument made under an Act of Parliament may direct that the reference must be construed as a reference to that Act or instrument—
 - (a) as it has effect at the time when the regulations are made, or
 - (b) both as it has effect at that time and as amended subsequently.
- (2) Descriptions of persons may be prescribed under section 115(2)(e) by reference to any criterion, including the following—
 - (a) their age,
 - (b) the fact that a prescribed person or a prescribed body accepts them as suffering from a prescribed medical condition,
 - (c) the fact that a prescribed person or a prescribed body accepts that a prescribed medical condition from which they suffer arose in prescribed circumstances,
 - (d) their receipt of benefit in money or kind under any enactment or their entitlement to receive any such benefit,
 - (e) the receipt of any such benefit by other persons satisfying prescribed conditions or the entitlement of other persons satisfying prescribed conditions to receive such benefits.
- (3) Regulations under section 115(3)(b) may direct that a person's resources and requirements be calculated—
 - (a) by a method set out in the regulations,
 - (b) by a method described by reference to a method of calculating or estimating income or capital specified in an enactment other than this section or in an instrument made under an Act of Parliament or by reference to such a method but subject to prescribed modifications,
 - (c) by reference to an amount applicable for the purposes of a payment under an Act of Parliament or an instrument made under an Act of Parliament, or
 - (d) by reference to the person's being or having been entitled to payment under an Act of Parliament or an instrument made under an Act of Parliament.

General ophthalmic services contracts

117 General ophthalmic services contracts: introductory

- (1) [^{F8}The Board] may enter into a contract under which primary ophthalmic services are provided in accordance with the following provisions of this Part.
- (2) A contract under this section is called in this Act a "general ophthalmic services contract".
- (3) A general ophthalmic services contract may make such provision as may be agreed between [^{F9}the Board] and the contractor or contractors in relation to—
 - (a) the services to be provided under the contract,
 - (b) remuneration under the contract, and

- (c) any other matters.
- (4) The services to be provided under a general ophthalmic services contract may include—
 - (a) services which are not primary ophthalmic services,
 - [^{F10}(b) services which are to be performed outside England.]
- (5) In this Part, "contractor", in relation to a general ophthalmic services contract, means any person entering into the contract with [^{F11}the Board].

Textual Amendments

- F8 Words in s. 117(1) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 55(2); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F9 Words in s. 117(3) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 55(3); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- **F10** S. 117(4)(b) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), **Sch. 4 para. 55(4)**; S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F11 Words in s. 117(5) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 55(3); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

118 Persons eligible to enter into GOS contracts

- (1) [^{F12}The Board] may, subject to such conditions and exceptions as may be prescribed, enter into a general ophthalmic services contract with any person.
- (2) But it may not enter into such a contract with a person who has been disqualified from doing so by an order of disqualification made by virtue of regulations under section 119.

Textual Amendments

F12 Words in s. 118(1) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 56; S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

119 Exclusion of contractors

- (1) The Secretary of State may make regulations conferring on [^{F13}the Board], or another prescribed person, a right to apply to the [^{F14}First-tier Tribunal] in prescribed circumstances for an order that a person ("P") be disqualified from entering into a general ophthalmic services contract.
- (2) The regulations may in particular provide for-
 - (a) the review by the [^{F15}First-tier Tribunal] of an order of disqualification made by virtue of regulations under this section,
 - (b) what will happen in relation to general ophthalmic services contracts to which P is a party when the order is made.

Status: Point in time view as at 01/04/2013.

Changes to legislation: National Health Service Act 2006, Part 6 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 20 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

Textual Amendments

- F13 Words in s. 119 substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 57; S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F14 Words in s. 119(1) substituted (18.1.2010) by The Transfer of Tribunal Functions Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/22), art. 1(1), Sch. 2 para. 110 (with Sch. 5)
- **F15** Words in s. 119(2)(a) substituted (18.1.2010) by The Transfer of Tribunal Functions Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/22), art. 1(1), Sch. 2 para. 110 (with Sch. 5)

120 GOS contracts: payments

- (1) The Secretary of State may give directions as to payments to be made under general ophthalmic services contracts.
- (2) A general ophthalmic services contract must require payments to be made under the contract in accordance with directions under this section.
- (3) A direction under subsection (1) may in particular—
 - (a) provide for payments to be made by reference to compliance with standards or the achievement of levels of performance,
 - (b) provide for payments to be made by reference to-
 - (i) any scheme or scale specified in the direction, or
 - (ii) a determination made by any person in accordance with factors specified in the direction,
 - (c) provide for the making of payments in respect of individual practitioners,
 - (d) provide that the whole or any part of a payment is subject to conditions (and may provide that payments are payable by [^{F16}the Board] only if it is satisfied as to certain conditions),
 - (e) make provision having effect from a date before the date of the direction, provided that, having regard to the direction as a whole, the provision is not detrimental to the persons to whose remuneration it relates.
- (4) Before giving a direction under subsection (1), the Secretary of State—
 - (a) must consult any body appearing to him to be representative of persons to whose remuneration the direction would relate, and
 - (b) may consult such other persons as he considers appropriate.
- (5) "Payments" includes fees, allowances, reimbursements, loans and repayments.

Textual Amendments

F16 Words in s. 120(3)(d) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 58; S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

121 GOS contracts: other required terms

- (1) A general ophthalmic services contract must contain such provision as may be prescribed (in addition to the provision required by the preceding provisions of this Part).
- (2) Regulations under subsection (1) may in particular make provision as to-

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- (a) the manner in which, and standards to which, services must be provided,
- (b) the persons who perform services,
- (c) the persons to whom services will be provided,
- (d) the variation of contract terms (other than terms required by or under this Part),
- (e) rights of entry and inspection (including inspection of clinical records and other documents),
- (f) the circumstances in which, and the manner in which, the contract may be terminated,
- (g) enforcement,
- (h) the adjudication of disputes.

(3) Regulations under subsection (2)(d) may-

- (a) make provision as to the circumstances in which [^{F17}the Board] may impose a variation of contract terms,
- (b) make provision as to the suspension or termination of any duty under the contract to provide services of a prescribed description.
- (4) Regulations making provision of the kind described in subsection (3)(b) may prescribe services by reference to the manner or circumstances in which they are provided.
- (5) Regulations under subsection (1) must make provision as to the right of persons to whom services are provided to choose the persons from whom they receive them.

Textual Amendments

F17 Words in s. 121(3)(a) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 59; S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

122 GOS contracts: disputes and enforcement

- (1) Regulations may make provision for the resolution of disputes as to the terms of a proposed general ophthalmic services contract.
- (2) Regulations under subsection (1) may make provision—
 - (a) for the referral of the terms of the proposed contract to the Secretary of State, and
 - (b) for the Secretary of State, or a person appointed by him, to determine the terms on which the contract may be entered into.
- (3) Regulations may make provision for a person or persons entering into a general ophthalmic services contract to be regarded, in circumstances where he or they so elect, as a health service body for the purposes of section 9, but only so far as concerns the general ophthalmic services contract (and not for any other purpose).
- (4) Regulations under subsection (3) may include provision as to the application of section 9 in cases where—
 - (a) persons practising in partnership elect to become a health service body, and
 - (b) there is a change in the membership of the partnership.
- (5) Where—
 - (a) by virtue of regulations under subsection (3), subsection section 9(11) applies in relation to a general ophthalmic services contract, and

(b) a direction as to payments is made under that provision in relation to the contract,

the direction is enforceable in a county court (if the court so orders) as if it were a judgment or order of that court.

Performance of primary ophthalmic services

123 Persons performing primary ophthalmic services

- (1) Regulations may provide that a health care professional of a prescribed description may not perform any primary ophthalmic service for which [^{F18}the Board] is responsible unless he is included in a list maintained under the regulations by [^{F18}the Board].
- (2) For the purposes of this section—
 - (a) "health care professional" means a person who is a member of a profession regulated by a body mentioned in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002 (c. 17),
 - [^{F19}(b) the Board is responsible for an ophthalmic service if it secures its provision by or under any enactment.]
- (3) Regulations under this section may make provision in relation to lists under this section and in particular as to—
 - (a) the preparation, maintenance and publication of a list,
 - (b) eligibility for inclusion in a list,
 - (c) applications for inclusion (including provision ^{F20}... for the procedure for applications and the documents to be supplied on application),
 - (d) the grounds on which an application for inclusion may or must be granted or refused,
 - (e) requirements with which a person included in a list must comply (including the declaration of financial interests and gifts and other benefits),
 - (f) suspension or removal from a list (including provision for the grounds for, and consequences of, suspension or removal),
 - (g) circumstances in which a person included in a list may not withdraw from it,
 - (h) payments to be made in respect of a person suspended from a list (including provision for the amount of the payment, or the method of calculating the payment, to be determined by the Secretary of State or a person appointed by him),
 - (i) the criteria to be applied in making decisions under the regulations,
 - (j) appeals against decisions made by $[^{F21}$ the Board] under the regulations, and
 - (k) disclosure of information about applicants for inclusion, grants or refusals of applications or suspensions or removals,

and may make any provision corresponding to anything in sections 151 to 159.

(4) Regulations under this section may, in particular, also provide for-

- (a) a person's inclusion in a list to be subject to conditions determined by [^{F22}the Board],
- (b) [^{F22}the Board] to vary the conditions or impose different ones,
- (c) the consequences of failing to comply with a condition (including removal from a list),

- (d) the review by [^{F23}the Board] of decisions made by it by virtue of the regulations.
- (5) The imposition of such conditions must be with a view to—
 - (a) preventing any prejudice to the efficiency of the services to which a list relates, or
 - (b) preventing fraud.
- (6) Regulations under this section may, in particular, also prescribe the qualifications and experience which a medical practitioner who applies for inclusion in a list under this section must have, and may—
 - (a) provide for the practitioner to show to the satisfaction of a committee recognised by the Secretary of State for the purpose that he possesses such qualifications and experience,
 - (b) confer on a person who is dissatisfied with the determination of such a committee a right of appeal to a committee appointed by the Secretary of State, and
 - (c) provide for anything which appears to the Secretary of State to be appropriate in connection with that right of appeal.
- (7) Regulations making provision as to the matters referred to in subsection (3)(k) may in particular authorise the disclosure of information—
 - (a) by [^{F24}the Board] to the Secretary of State, and
 - (b) by the Secretary of State to $[^{F24}$ the Board].

Textual Amendments

- **F18** Words in s. 123(1) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 60(2)(a); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F19 S. 123(2)(b) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 60(3); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F20 Words in s. 123(3)(c) omitted (1.4.2013) by virtue of Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4),
 Sch. 4 para. 60(4); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F21 Words in s. 123(3)(j) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 60(2)(b); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F22 Words in s. 123(4)(a)(b) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4),
 Sch. 4 para. 60(2)(c); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F23 Words in s. 123(4)(d) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 60(2)(c); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F24 Words in s. 123(7)(a)(b) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4),
 Sch. 4 para. 60(2)(d); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

Assistance and support

124 Assistance and support: primary ophthalmic services

 [^{F25}The Board] may provide assistance or support to any person providing or proposing to provide primary ophthalmic services under a general ophthalmic services contract [^{F26}or primary ophthalmic services that fall within section 115(4)]. Status: Point in time view as at 01/04/2013.

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- (2) Assistance or support provided by [^{F27}the Board] under subsection (1) is provided on such terms, including terms as to payment, as [^{F28}the Board] considers appropriate.
- (3) "Assistance" includes financial assistance.

Textual Amendments

- **F25** Words in s. 124(1) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 61(2)(a); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- **F26** Words in s. 124(1) inserted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 61(2)(b); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F27 Words in s. 124(2) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 61(3)(a); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- **F28** Words in s. 124(2) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 61(3)(b); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

Local Optical Committees

125 Local Optical Committees

- (1) [^{F29}The Board may recognise a committee formed for an area], which it is satisfied is representative of—
 - (a) the persons to whom subsection (2) applies, and
 - (b) the persons to whom subsection (3) applies.
- (2) This subsection applies to each person who, under a general ophthalmic services contract entered into by him, is providing primary ophthalmic services in the area for which the committee is formed.
- (3) This subsection applies to each optometrist not falling within subsection (2)—
 - (a) who is performing primary ophthalmic services in the area for which the committee is formed ^{F30}... under a general ophthalmic services contract, and
 - (b) who has notified [^{F31}the Board] that he wishes to be represented by the committee (and has not notified it that he wishes to cease to be so represented).
- (4) A committee recognised under this section is called the Local Optical Committee for the area for which it is formed.
- (5) Any such committee may delegate any of its functions, with or without restrictions or conditions, to sub-committees composed of members of that committee.
- (6) Any such committee may co-opt persons not falling within subsection (2) or (3) on such terms as it considers appropriate.
- (7) Regulations may require [^{F32}the Board], in the exercise of its functions relating to primary ophthalmic services, to consult any committee recognised by it under this section on such occasions and to such extent as may be prescribed.
- (8) A committee recognised under this section has such other functions as may be prescribed.
- (9) A committee recognised under this section must in respect of each year determine the amount of its administrative expenses for that year.

(10) [^{F33}The Board] may—

- (a) on the request of a committee recognised by it, allot to that committee such sums as [^{F34}the Board] may determine for defraying the committee's administrative expenses, and
- (b) deduct the amount of such sums from the remuneration of persons of whom the committee is representative under subsection (1)(a) under the general ophthalmic services contracts entered into by those persons with [^{F34}the Board].
- (11) The administrative expenses of a committee include the travelling and subsistence allowances payable to its members.

Textual Amendments

- **F29** Words in s. 125(1) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 62(2); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- **F30** Words in s. 125(3)(a) omitted (1.4.2013) by virtue of Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 62(3)(a); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F31 Words in s. 125(3)(b) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 62(3)(b); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- **F32** Words in s. 125(7) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 62(4); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- **F33** Words in s. 125(10) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4), Sch. 4 para. 62(5)(a); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)
- F34 Words in s. 125(10)(a)(b) substituted (1.4.2013) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), s. 306(4),
 Sch. 4 para. 62(5)(b); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

[^{F35}Directions

Textual Amendments

F35 S. 125A and cross-heading inserted (27.3.2012 for specified purposes, 1.4.2013 in so far as not already in force) by Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), ss. 49(3), 306(1)(d)(4); S.I. 2013/160, art. 2(2) (with arts. 7-9)

125A Exercise of functions

- (1) The Secretary of State may direct the Board to exercise any of the Secretary of State's functions relating to the provision of primary ophthalmic services.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not apply to any function of the Secretary of State of making an order or regulations.
- (3) The Secretary of State may give directions to the Board about its exercise of any functions relating to the provision of primary ophthalmic services (including functions which the Board has been directed to exercise under subsection (1)).
- (4) The Board may direct a clinical commissioning group, a Special Health Authority or such other body as may be prescribed to exercise any of the Board's functions relating to the provision of primary ophthalmic services.

- (5) The Board may give directions to a clinical commissioning group, a Special Health Authority or such other body as may be prescribed about the exercise by the body of any functions relating to the provision of primary ophthalmic services (including functions which it has been directed to exercise under subsection (4)).
- (6) Subsection (4) does not apply to such functions, or functions of such descriptions, as may be prescribed.
- (7) Where the Board gives a direction to a body under subsection (4) or (5), it may disclose to the body the information it has about the provision of the primary ophthalmic services in question, if the Board considers it necessary or appropriate to do so in order to enable or assist the body to exercise the function specified in the direction.
- (8) A body which is given a direction under subsection (4) or (5) must report to the Board on matters arising out of the exercise of the function to which the direction relates.
- (9) A report under subsection (8) must be made in such form and manner as the Board may specify.
- (10) The Board may, in exercising its functions relating to the provision of the primary ophthalmic services in question, have regard to a report under subsection (8).]

Status:

Point in time view as at 01/04/2013.

Changes to legislation:

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