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IDMSC™ International
Disability Management
Standards Council



Providing leadership,
excellence and quality
assurance in occupational
rehabilitation practice
and programs

Workers who suffer disabling injuries or illnesses all too often lose their employment and potentially face lives of poverty, pain and struggle.

Likewise, employers and society as a whole, suffer often unnecessary costs through longer claims duration, higher long term disability insurance costs resulting in wage replacement, retraining and other associated costs.

Program and professional standards in Disability Management, developed through a consensus approach, international collaboration and applying evidence-based optimum practice standards from around the world will reduce the social and economic impact of disabilities on workers, employers and society.

Certification gives peace of mind



"Certification gives you more confidence in the decisions you make."

Leanne Hamm, CDMP, DM Coordinator, Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations, Regina, Canada

Leading employers want their disability management programs to be run by experts. IDMSC's professional certification system will give you that peace of mind.

Everyone takes it for granted that doctors, engineers and certified general accountants must pass licensing exams before they are allowed to practice. Now, disability management professionals and practitioners have the same opportunity.

The IDMSC has two designations available: Certified Return to Work Coordinator™ (CRTWC™) and Certified Disability Management Professional™ (CDMP™).

To earn these designations, applicants must study, gain on-the-job experience, and write a seven-hour exam.

Leanne Hamm, who is the disability management coordinator for the

Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations, passed the exam in 2003. She believes "certification gives you more confidence in the decisions you make."

She also says the designation has helped give her more credibility within her organization. "It makes a difference when the person on the other end of the phone knows you have the right background, experience and educational requirements," she says.

Certification gives peace of mind



“Someone who comes with certification brings with them a pedigree that means you know they can do the job well.”

Sharon Brintnell, Professor and Director, Occupational Performance Analysis Unit, Department of Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, University of Alberta, and IDMSC Chair Certification Commission, Edmonton, Canada

Sharon Brintnell, professor, Department of Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, University of Alberta and chair of the IDMSC Certification Commission, agrees. “Someone who comes with certification brings with them a pedigree that means

you know they can do the job well,” she says. “The certification is a hallmark of a level of knowledge – it’s like a quality assurance check. It shows that the person who carries it has achieved a certain standard and is keeping up with changes in the field.”

For employer or worker, the IDMSC’s designations are: recognizable, transferable and set a professional standard of excellence.

Certification is international



"It's the first time for the Germans that we have an accepted quality standard. It gives us the chance to find out: 'are we really as good as we think we are?'"

Joachim Breuer, PhD, Director General, German Federation of Workers' Compensation Boards (HVBG) and IDMSC Co-chair, Bonn, Germany

The designations, which were the result of a collaborative multi-national effort, are now finding acceptance around the world. They have been licensed by the German Federation of Workers' Compensation Boards (HVBG), covering 43 million workers as their long-term internal and external

standard for individuals working in the return to work/disability management arena.

"We've been working in Germany on disability management for more than 100 years," says the group's Director General,

Joachim Breuer, PhD. "We're working at a very high level, but this system can help us improve. It's the first time for the Germans that we have an accepted quality standard. It gives us the chance to find out: 'are we really as good as we think we are?'"

Certification is international



"Today, about 300 [of 500] disabled employees have been successfully reintegrated into normal production jobs and 160 have resumed work in other areas, such as service jobs."

Heinz Breidenbach, CDMP, former Disability Management Coordinator for Ford Motor Company, Cologne, Germany

Heinz Breidenbach, the first German to write and pass the CDMP exam, is a former disability management coordinator for Ford Motor Company in Cologne. By diligently applying the principles of good disability management, he helped Ford achieve some dramatic improvements.

"At the same time as the launch of the new Ford Fiesta, we had 500 employees [out of 5,000] with serious medical problems who didn't have jobs in the new production lines," he says. Today, about 300 of those employees have been successfully reintegrated into normal production jobs and 160 have resumed work in other areas, such as service jobs. "It was a big challenge for me to

work with a team to solve this issue," he says. "My certification offered a win-win-win situation," he says. "It helped my employer, by letting me contribute to improved profitability and a more motivated workforce; it helped the employee through a safer workplace and better financial security, and it helped society with a better social safety net."

Certification is international



"Having disability management professionals who are qualified and accredited is an important pre-condition for success."

Frank Pot, Director, TNO Work and Employment, Amsterdam, Netherlands

In the Netherlands, an organization known as TNO Work and Employment focuses on research into current and future forms of work, and provides solutions to complex work problems. "We conduct experiments in the "hothouse" of the business

community and support the implementation of such solutions as return-to-work programmes," says director Frank Pot. "For us, having disability management professionals who are qualified and accredited is an important pre-condition

for success. For this reason, TNO, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, wholeheartedly supports the objectives of the IDMSC."

The IDMSC program audit tool will help evaluate your success



“ This tool really gives employers a comprehensive understanding of where their strengths and weaknesses are in their disability management program.”

Nicola MacNaughton, CDMP, President, Occupational Concepts, Moncton, Canada

Does your company do a poor or an outstanding job at managing disability in the workplace? Or are you somewhere in between? You can now find out by performing an audit.

The IDMSC's Consensus Based Disability Management Audit™ (CBDMA™) is a highly regarded and well-researched tool that will evaluate your current performance and highlight areas that need remedial action.

The audit was developed after a global review of best practices in disability management. Developed by a broad group of government, business and labour organizations, the tool is unique in that it is consensus-based.

Nicola MacNaughton, a Certified Disability Management Professional who is President of Occupational Concepts, operates a firm licensed to conduct the audit in Canada. “This

tool really gives employers a comprehensive understanding of where their strengths and weaknesses are in their disability management program,” she says. “It allows them to identify the gaps so I can help them draw up an effective, step-by-step action plan.”

The IDMSC program audit tool will help evaluate your success



"The thing that appeals most about the CBDMA process is, not only the joint employer and union development of the tool, but, also, its rigorous testing and international acceptance."

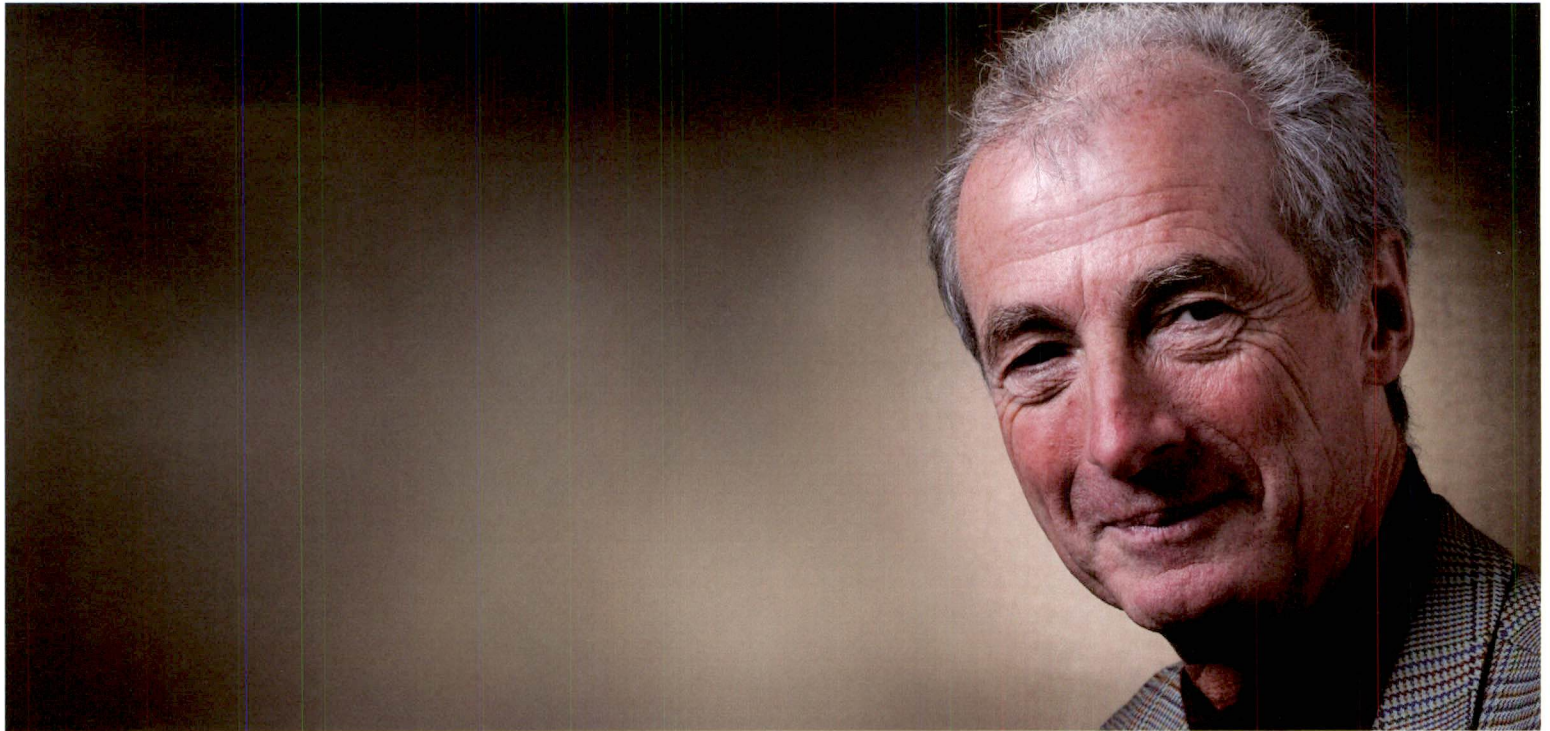
Cameron McCullagh, CEO, Employers Mutual, Sydney, Australia

In Australia, Cameron McCullagh, who is CEO of Employers Mutual, says the audit tool will help Australian employers take disability management to the next level of achievement. "As the leading provider

for workers compensation insurance in New South Wales we believe it is imperative we continually look for ways of improving outcomes from workplace injuries," he said. "The thing that appeals

most about the CBDMA process is, not only the joint employer and union development of the tool, but, also, its rigorous testing and international acceptance."

The IDMSC program audit tool will help evaluate your success



"If you can provide evidence of your success – and the CBDMA can do that – you will have a powerful position to negotiate contributions and reduced premiums with social insurance carriers."

Hans-Martin Schian, M.D., Scientific Director, IQPR, Cologne, Germany

In Germany, IQPR holds a license to conduct audits. Hans-Martin Schian, M.D., scientific director for the rehabilitation firm, believes it is a powerful tool for getting results. "Employers can enjoy many

benefits from successful disability management programs," he says. "These include achieving internal cost savings, improving health indicators, ensuring employability and rising employee satisfaction. If you

can provide evidence of your success – and the CBDMA can do that – you will have a powerful position to negotiate contributions and reduced premiums with social insurance carriers."

The IDMSC program audit tool will help evaluate your success



"Using the audit tool, employers can pinpoint the areas in which they need to improve their workplace accommodations and ensure they're engaged in effective return to work programs."

Lex Frieden, Senior Vice-President, The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research, Houston, USA

In the United States, the audit should be one of the tools used to fight unemployment and ensure opportunity for the disabled. So says Lex Frieden, senior vice-president for The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research based in Houston, Texas, whose organization has

a license for the audit. "In the US there are many well qualified, trained, highly motivated people with disabilities who want to work and who can't find appropriate opportunities," he says. "At the same time, there are many employers who want to hire people just like that –

but they can't connect with them. Using the audit tool, employers can pinpoint the areas in which they need to improve their workplace accommodations and ensure they're engaged in effective return to work programs."

The IDMSC program audit tool will help evaluate your success



“There’s huge value in having a program standard that invites international comparison and offers employers and workers global quality assurance.”

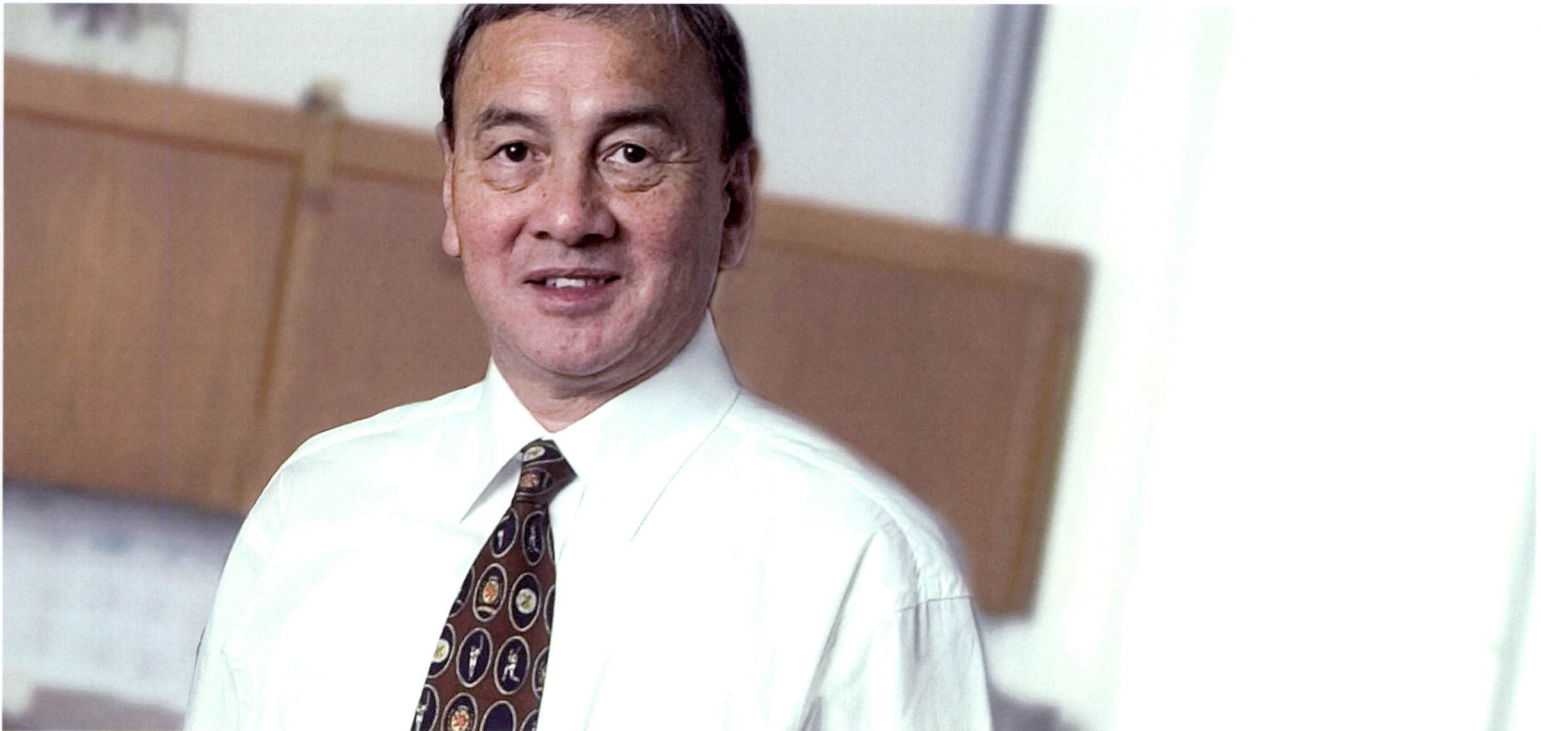
Ralph McGinn, Chair of the IDMSC’s Global Audit Commission and former CEO of the Workers’ Compensation Board of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

One of the most important features is that the results of the audit tool require the consensus of workers and managers. “That is key,” says Ralph McGinn the former CEO of the British Columbia Workers’ Compensation Board and the

chair of the IDMSC’s Global Audit Commission. “Employers and workers need to collaborate to succeed,” he says, “this tool gives them a forum for doing that.” As well, in an age of globalization, the tool offers a standard that is truly

international. “There’s huge value in having a program standard that invites international comparison and offers employers and workers global quality assurance.”

Audit tool leads to first premium-pricing policy offered in the world



"Incentives work and if this project is successful, as we expect it will be, we will look to adapting the model to other industries."

Sid Fattedad, Chief Financial Officer, Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

The IDMSC's audit tool can do more than reassure employers. It can also help improve their bottom line.

With the help of the tool, pulp and paper employers in British Columbia, Canada, now have the chance to earn discounts in their workers' compensation premium rates.

It's part of a three-year pilot project that was collaboratively developed with employers and unions in British Columbia.

"We believe so strongly in the principles of effective rehabilitation we decided it was time to offer a positive financial incentive to the employers who will participate in the pilot project," said Sid Fattedad who is Chief Financial Officer for the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia.

"Incentives work and if this project is successful, as we expect it will be, we will look to adapting the model to other industries," he said. The pulp and paper industry was selected as the test employer because while its accident rate has

dropped sharply over the last decade, the duration of absences for those injured has increased dramatically.

Under the new program, employers will undergo the CBDMA audit of their disability management program. If they achieve a score of 80 percent or better, they will be eligible to receive an immediate 10 percent discount in their WCB benefit and administration cost rates. For a company of 800 employees, this could mean a typical savings of \$40,000 per year.

Working internationally helps develop best practice guidelines



“As more individuals become certified DM professionals, and more companies conduct audits, we can be reassured that persons with disabilities will get fair treatment.”

Brian Payne, President, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada and IDMSC Co-chair, Ottawa, Canada

Brian Payne, President of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada and IDMSC co-chair says: “Our challenge

now is to convert words into measurable outcomes. As more individuals become certified DM professionals, and more companies conduct audits, we can be

reassured that persons with disabilities will get fair treatment.”

Working internationally helps develop best practice guidelines



“Employers can do the right thing and improve their bottom line by adopting principles of good disability management.”

Steve Hill, former Senior Vice-President Human Resources, Weyerhaeuser Company and IDMSC Co-chair, Tacoma, USA

Steve Hill, former Senior Vice-President Human Resources, Weyerhaeuser Company, and IDMSC co-chair, agrees. “Employers can do the right thing and

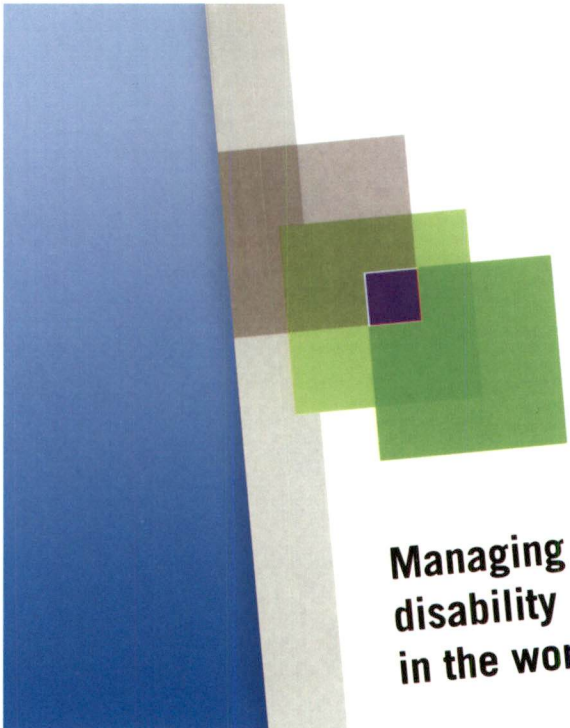
improve their bottom line by adopting principles of good disability management. Disability costs are expensive. There will be increased competition for skilled

workers in the future. We know that people with disabilities have valuable skills to contribute. It only makes sense to welcome their contribution.”

Code offers international standards for managing disability



International
Labour
Office
Geneva



Managing disability in the workplace

Proof that disability management is an emerging global issue comes from the International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva, Switzerland. In 2002, this

U.N.-sponsored body released the world's first International Disability Management Code of practice.

This code, which has been translated into 22 languages, provides the first truly international standard for managing disability in the workplace.

Frequently asked questions

About the designations: Certified Return to Work Coordinator™ (CRTWC™) and Certified Disability Management Professional™ (CDMP™).

1. What is the purpose of these designations?

These designations give employers, workers and insurance/service providers the assurance that their return to work/disability management professionals are well-educated, properly trained to an international standard and have kept their knowledge up to date. For the person carrying the designation, it provides credibility in the workplace, portability to other jobs, even in different countries, and an invaluable connection to peers in the field.

2. Who developed the designations?

The process began in 1997 with extensive research into the experience, skills and competencies required to define a professional standard of excellence in disability management. Academics, professionals and workplace practitioners from Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and the ILO contributed to the development of the standards, which are now administered through the IDMSC.

3. How is the designation earned?

Disability management can be studied at a growing number of colleges and universities around the world. Applicants must also have workplace experience in disability management. The final step towards earning the designation is to write a seven-hour exam administered by the IDMSC. The exam was created by a highly reputable test development agency, Assessment Strategies Inc., of Ottawa with input from a broad cross-section of employers, unions, workers compensation boards, private insurance and service providers.

4. Who is likely to seek these designations?

Anyone working in the field of return to work/disability management who wishes to demonstrate his or her professional competence, individual and organizational leadership, and commitment to quality assurance.

5. What is the difference between the two designations?

Certified Return to Work Coordinators expedite, coordinate and facilitate the return to work of persons with injuries, illnesses and disabilities in a range of settings. Certified Disability Management Professionals may provide direct services to workers with disabilities but in addition they often perform executive functions which may include administration of disability management services, development of policies and procedures, promotion of return to work concepts through education and training, consulting to joint labour-management committees, program evaluation, etc. In both cases, return to work / disability management services may be provided internally by an employee within the workplace or externally by a provider. For further details, please refer to the Occupational Standards in Disability Management.

Frequently asked questions

About the Consensus Based Disability Management Audit™ (CBDMA™)

1. What is the purpose of the audit?

The purpose of the audit is to evaluate the excellence of any organization's disability management program and to provide suggestions for improving it.

2. Who developed the audit?

The audit was developed at a cost of \$2.5 million, and is administered through the International Disability Management Standards Council Secretariat, based in Victoria, BC, Canada. Designed by a broad group of government, provider, business and labour organizations, the audit is unique in that it requires consensus between workers and management whenever it is administered. It was developed after a global review of best practices in disability management which involved contributions from Canada, the United States, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the International Labour Organization.

3. Who would want to take the audit?

Any organization that wants to improve its disability management program should consider this audit. There are three main reasons why organizations want to improve their disability management programs:

- 1) It's the law. In many countries, employers are legally required to assist employees back to work.
- 2) It's good business. Work accidents cost billions of dollars each year in direct and indirect costs. For companies, disability costs can be expensive, typically in the range of \$2 million per year per 1,000 workers. Effective disability management has been shown to reduce these costs by 30 to 50 percent.
- 3) It's the right thing to do. Effective disability management programs allow individuals who acquire a disabling condition to continue to work and avoid lives of poverty.

4. What happens during an audit and how long does it take?

An audit takes less than a week. Auditors review policies, procedures, minutes from meetings and any other data the company has collected. Then, auditors meet with a group representing both workers and management to present an 80-point questionnaire dealing with the specifics of the operation's disability management program. Both sides must agree on the answers. Finally, randomly selected employees – representing both management and workers – are surveyed for their views on the operation's disability management program.

5. Who conducts the audit?

The audit is conducted by a licensed firm with trained and accredited professionals.

6. What happens when an audit is completed?

The auditor provides a complete report, giving the organization a score (out of 100) and offering detailed advice on how to improve. In some jurisdictions, Workers' Compensation Boards or other insurers may offer financial incentives for workplaces that achieve a certain minimum score.

7. How much does it cost to take an audit?

Cost varies with the size and scope of the operation. The cost can often be recouped almost immediately. Even minor improvements in disability management programs, suggested as a result of the audit, typically can lead to significant savings in short- and long-term disability costs.

About the IDMSC



The International Disability Management Standards Council (IDMSC) was created in 2003. Its goal is to reduce the human, social and economic costs of disability in the workplace. To achieve this end, it promotes standards and programs that are international, professional and based on consensus.

For further information regarding the International Disability Management Standards Council and for contact information in each jurisdiction, please contact the IDMSC Secretariat as follows:

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IDMSC™ International
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