

Integris impact felt in community



Integris Southwest Medical Center will host its 33rd Annual Hispanic Health Fair and Mobile Clinic April 29. Photos provided



Advanced practice nurses, nurses, and other healthcare professionals will donate their time to the upcoming Hispanic Health Fair and Mobile Clinic.

by Bobby Anderson, RN, Staff Writer

From an early age, Ana Garcia, APRN-CNP knew she wanted to give back. First, she became a nurse, then she advanced to be a nurse practitioner.

And for the last several years, she's been a key provider on Oklahoma City's south side at Integris Southwest Medical Center.

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ANA Responds to SCOTUS Decision



The American Nurses Association (ANA) is relieved that the U.S. Supreme Court has protected patient access to mifepristone, a medication used to treat a range of critical health care conditions including abortion. With this decision in *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. U.S. Food and Drug Administration*, mifepristone will remain widely available to individuals in the state of Texas and the FDA's decades-long approval of this safe and effective reproductive medication remains intact.

"This decision is undoubtedly an important win in efforts to protect patients' basic rights to reproductive health care options," said ANA President Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN. "As much as today's decision is a relief, it should also serve as a stark warning that evidence-based sexual and reproductive health care is being threatened every day, especially after the upending of *Roe vs. Wade* less than a year ago. Advocacy to protect reproductive justice must continue."

As the largest group of health care professionals in the U.S., nurses have an ethical obligation to safeguard patient privacy and ensure that patients can make their own decisions based on full information and available options. ANA affirms that sexual and reproductive health care must include access to contraception and abortion care.

Reproductive health equity is a basic human right. As the case continues, ANA joins millions of patients and health care professionals urging the courts to exercise the utmost restraint in interfering with safe and effective healthcare delivery.

EVENT

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Garcia and other healthcare providers will be on hand in the coming days for the annual Hispanic Health Fair and Mobile Clinic.

Approx 1,200 participants attended last year's event with organizers expecting at least that many as nurses, physicians, nurse practitioners, advanced practice providers as well as community resource groups volunteer their time.

The 33rd edition of the event will be held from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 29 at Metro Technology Center, 1900 Springlake Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73111.

Services are free to the public.

Participants will be offered information and resources on health and wellness and free health screenings will be available including cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, vision, and dental screenings along with lung function testing, hearing exams, EKGs, immunizations, and COVID-19 immunizations and testing.

Cancer screenings will also be available by appointment only for skin, oral, breast, prostate, and colorectal cancer.

Fresh produce will also be

provided for all attendees. Reservations are required for all cancer screenings. For more information and reservations, please call 405-636-7548 or 405-636-7549.

Carmen Romo serves as the director of Hispanic outreach services for Integris and helps coordinate the vast network of resources to plug participants into the healthcare they need.

"They try to make it as family-friendly as possible with different events and discussions that would be interesting for the entire family," Garcia said.

As an APRN since 2015, Garcia has participated in the event for multiple years but one story will, in particular, will always stick with her.

It was two years ago when Garcia felt a lump on a patient's breast. From there, Garcia was able to get a mammogram ordered with follow-up services to OU Health.

"It turned out to be cancer," Garcia said. "Later, she became my patient and we were able to follow her through her entire care. She survived. I think that was such a cool circular moment. You meet these patients at the health fairs and they get to see a service they probably haven't had access to in a long time or ever. You explain it to them

and they're generally involved and motivated to be more active in participating in their health."

Garcia still has that patient to this day.

"I believe it is vital to the community to be able to educate patients and let them know why these preventative visits are so vital to their health," Garcia said.

Garcia's daily role is at Integris Southwest Primary Care Clinic on SW 44th and Western Ave.

Monday through Friday she serves in an autonomous practice role with her own patient panel.

"We stay pretty busy all the time, booking out until November for new patients," said Garcia, who is also the president of the Association of Oklahoma Nurse Practitioners.

"I knew this is what I wanted to do since I was a child. I knew I wanted to serve my community, said Garcia, who is fluent in Spanish. "I

serve in southwest Oklahoma City ... and I practice in an area where I know a lot of my patients are Spanish speaking. That's intentional because I know my outreach can be a lot greater to a typically underserved population. You would be amazed about what comes through my door that has never been evaluated."

Garcia will always remember that one patient but she has no idea how many others coming to the clinic may receive lifesaving services.

"We see the positive outcomes on a daily basis, if anyone is available to participate or volunteer please reach out," she said. "We're always in need of volunteers so it would be great to have everyone on board."

For more information about Integris Southwest Medical Center, visit: <https://integrisok.com/careers>





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CAREERS IN NURSING: PUTTING PATIENTS' MINDS AT EASE - RN FULLFILLS CALLING

story and photo by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Brian Harding played a lot of sports growing up. Every time somebody would get hurt, he felt compelled to run over and ask if there was anything he could do to help. He observed a lot of trainers in sports medicine.

"I was always inspired by them, knowing what questions to ask so they could figure out what happened to the player," said Harding, RN, director of Centers of Excellence at Community Hospital North, located in Oklahoma City. "I was always inspired by that. So, when I was getting older and getting out of high school, I was figuring out what to do. And I was like, 'I'd like to do something medical. I would say that's where it came from.'"

Today, his career focuses on lower extremity joint replacement surgeries for hips and knees. He coordinates the care and makes sure patients are educated about the entire process of surgery and their recovery.

Harding is responsible for submitting all relevant tracking information to the Centers for

Medicare & Medicaid Services.

He is a 2001 graduate of OSU/OKC in Oklahoma City. A few years later his nursing career was interrupted to serve his country when he was called by the National Guard to serve in the war in Iraq. His nursing career has encompassed surgery, trauma and ICU nursing at OU Medical Center while also working part time at Oklahoma Center for Orthopedic & Multi-Specialty Surgery in a case management role for orthopedics, and post anesthesia care.

He was at OCOM in 2016 when the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services developed the Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement (CJR) Model to improve care for Medicare patients undergoing hip and knee replacements. He accepted a new management position with CJR until his capacity was eliminated during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. He had enjoyed his field of nursing and began searching for a similar role.

Harding was hired as the recovery room manager at

Community Hospital when an opening for his present job as the director of Centers of Excellence was offered to him there. Harding fell in love with Community Hospital after seeing how the physicians and nurses are friendly and work well with one another, he said.

Harding works directly with case managers, especially when notified that a patient has not had all their pre-admission testing done. Patients that are healthy enough may need a joint replacement. The patients he encounters cannot get around like they used to do. They must use a walker, a wheelchair or a cane while living with chronic pain every day.

"Maybe they used to like to garden or go for walks and hikes," Harding continued. "They can't do that because of that pain and it's holding them back from doing the things that help them live a fun, fulfilled life."

He recalled conducting a pre-operative class and explaining how to prepare their houses against any prevailing hazards that could

impact their recovery. It's important to clear pathways and prepare meals in advance of a knee or hip replacement surgery.

"That way after your surgery, if you don't live with anybody, you're not up in the kitchen standing on one leg trying to cook a meal," he explained.

On the day of surgery, he explains everything that happens, including knee and hip replacement models.

He recalled one day after one of his classes when an elderly woman came to him saying she was so glad she came to the class. She had been afraid.

"When she learned she needed to have her knee replaced, she thought they were going to cut-off the bottom of her thigh bone, cut off the top of her shin bone and replace it with metal and plastic mechanics," Harding said.

He explained that a knee surgery basically provides what is like a bottle cap on the lower femur bone and

See HARDING Page 5



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Brian Harding, RN, makes sure patients are educated about the entire process of joint replacement surgery at Community Hospital North, located in Oklahoma City.

HARDING
Continued from Page 4

another at the bottom of the shin bone with the spacer in-between. “She said, ‘That really helped relieve me. I was nervous about this. Your explanation of everything really helped me.’ Maybe it’s not saving lives but it’s putting patients’ minds at ease, helping them to understand what to expect throughout this whole process,” Barton said. Barton knows how to balance

his days at work with fun and relaxation. He has an 8-year-old son. So, they spend father-and-son time going fishing or bicycle riding. Barton also coaches his son’s soccer team. Sometimes, Barton and his wife take their son camping. “We go on family trips. He likes watching monster trucks. We’ve gone down to Florida a couple of times and watched the big finals in open stadiums where there’s like 12 or 15 different vehicles coming in to compete.”

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A nurse in blue scrubs is shown from the back, with her right arm raised in a fist. The background is a bright blue sky with white plus signs and orange stars. The text "You've GOT THIS!" is written in a mix of white and orange fonts. A white circle on the right says "JOIN FOR ONLY \$15 PER MONTH". At the bottom, the logos for ONA (Oklahoma Nurses Association) and ANA (American Nurses Association) are shown, along with the website "JOINANA.ORG".

A woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a white sweater, is smiling. The background is a blurred image of a hospital room with medical equipment.

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NURSE TALK



What was your favorite subject in grade school?



"History. There is a lot that you can learn whether it's recent or prehistoric times."



Markayla Patton, LPN

"Reading just fascinates me. I love stories. Art I love because it makes me feel peaceful and I'm really good at it."



Melissa Mayfield, RN

"I liked English best, probably because I was very good at it. But I loved to write and wanted to do that correctly."



Susan Laney, RN

Oklahoma Hospital Association Names New President



After a nationwide search, the Oklahoma Hospital Association (OHA) board of directors has selected Rich Rasmussen as its new president, effective June 1. Rasmussen replaces Patti Davis, who will retire as the organization's leader in June after four decades

in the hospital industry. Rasmussen is only the fifth executive to lead the organization in its 104-year history. Rasmussen has served in executive leadership roles in the health care industry for more than 30 years. Most recently, he was president and CEO of the Montana Hospital Association. There he successfully led the association's efforts to reauthorize Medicaid expansion, double the size of the state's Medicaid supplemental payment program, and modify the state's medical liability and telehealth laws. "The board is confident that Rich is a tremendous choice to lead the organization. He brings an extensive record of accomplishment in Montana and Florida, and a vision and deep understanding of health policy. His leadership experience will bring new skills and approaches to the association's mission of meeting the health care

needs of Oklahomans," said Tammy Powell, OHA board chair and president, SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital - Oklahoma City. "We want to build on the success of Patti's exceptional and invaluable leadership over the past five years." Rasmussen served in leadership roles at the Florida Hospital Association including vice president for member relations, vice president for legislative affairs, and vice president of strategic communications. In his membership relations role, he also served as chief administrative officer for the FHA Research and Education Foundation and chief strategy officer for FHA Services Corporation. Early in his career, Rasmussen was a press assistant with the U.S. Senate Budget Committee and later, director of government relations at Orlando Health. He holds a bachelor's degree in communications from Florida Southern College. "I'm honored to be selected to continue OHA's strong legacy of improving the health and health care of all Oklahomans," said Rasmussen. "The OHA membership is deeply committed to strengthening its support for their patients, caregivers and the communities they serve and I look forward to leading the organization and building on our



Rich Rasmussen, President Oklahoma Hospital Association

collective commitment to preserve access to high quality and affordable health care in Oklahoma." "It has been the honor of my lifetime to serve the members of the Oklahoma Hospital Association over the past five years. Together, we accomplished amazing things. Rich is well respected among state hospital association executives and his wide variety of experience in association management and health care policy will serve the mission of the OHA well," said Davis. Rasmussen and his wife, Judy, have five adult children.

(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2023 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)



OU partnering for nursing's future

When Julie Hoff, PhD, MPH, RN, first stepped into her role as dean of the **University of Oklahoma Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing**, she understood the need for nurses in Oklahoma. "I needed to build relationships and understand priorities," Hoff said of her first order of business. "You can't address big complex problems alone. As the flagship college of nursing, I am responsible for nursing workforce development in Oklahoma and regionally."

So Hoff decided to take a three-pronged approach. The first was to build academic programs that aligned with the health sector's needs. From there, Hoff focused on building and strengthening the nurse workforce through enrollment and established academic pathways that advanced the education of practicing nurses.

Finally, she aligned the college with other sectors through strategic partnerships to drive change and influence policy.

The approach was dubbed OK-WINS, which stands for Workforce Innovation in Nursing, and healthcare entities and nursing students throughout the region are reaping the benefits.

"Addressing the nursing workforce shortage takes coordinated efforts of many with the goals of increasing the number of nurse faculty, supporting students through academic success programs and scholarships, and strengthen the nursing education infrastructure," Hoff said. "We have to collaborate across the state and work together with a unified vision of all that is necessary to strengthen the nursing workforce and how doing so will improve the quality of care and health outcomes for all patients." There is little doubt of the vital role nurses play in

keeping our families, friends, and communities safe and healthy. Nurses are indeed the oxygen of the healthcare system and the impact they have on society is significant.

"Often on the frontlines of crisis, it is nurses who provide unconquerable spirit, clinical expertise, revolutionary thinking, and healing needed to rally those around them," Hoff said. "We saw this during the pandemic when nurses were involved in changing how care was delivered; nurses created many new products and processes, and nurses found solutions to connect patients to their loved ones." That's the everyday focus for Hoff and OU. In the last few months, OU has announced a number of exciting partnerships to reach that goal.

Most recently, USAO and Murray State partnered with OU to create a pathway to nursing through a direct entry program. Murray State Associate degree nursing graduates can now complete a baccalaureate degree in nursing online at OU.

OU also established a Nurse Intern Program that supports clinical education through paid internships. More than 400 nursing students have participated, and practice partners report a narrowing of the academic-practice gap and improved recruitment and retention post-licensure.

OU has also added new nurse practitioner programs to meet

specialty care needs in neonatology and mental health.

Just a few months ago, Hoff announced partnerships with Norman Regional Hospital and Duncan Regional Hospital to increase access to OU nursing education by opening programs at those locations.

The expansion adds to the college's existing locations that offer the traditional BSN – the **OU Health Sciences Center** in Oklahoma City, the **OU-Tulsa Schusterman Center**, and **Cameron University in Lawton**.

"At OU, OK-WINS means we collaborate to build and strengthen the nursing workforce," Hoff said. "Last year OU committed to accept all qualified candidates to our baccalaureate nursing program, increasing prelicensure enrollment by 103 students and overall total enrollment by 185 students."

Hoff pointed out this year's incoming prelicensure nursing class — which has grown from 341 students in Fall 2021 to 439 students in Fall 2022 — is the largest it has ever been.

Tapping multiple resources, OU established the **Degree Accelerator Program**, a tuition-free, workforce investment program for practicing nurses to **earn a BSN, MSN, DNP or PhD degree**.

"This program dismantled financial, social, and attitudinal barriers to enable practicing nurses to advance academically and professionally, thus positioning them to exercise their knowledge and power to transform care and improve health outcomes for all Oklahomans," Hoff said.

That partnership across sectors is helping to drive synergistic change, influence policy to modernize nursing regulation, and foster collaboration to ensure sustained investment in nursing education.

"To ease the nursing shortage in Oklahoma it takes all of us working together innovating, integrating, and strengthening academic programming, workforce development, and policy," Hoff said. And it's all been a part of the plan.

For more information about the University of Oklahoma Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing, visit <https://nursing.ouhsc.edu/>.








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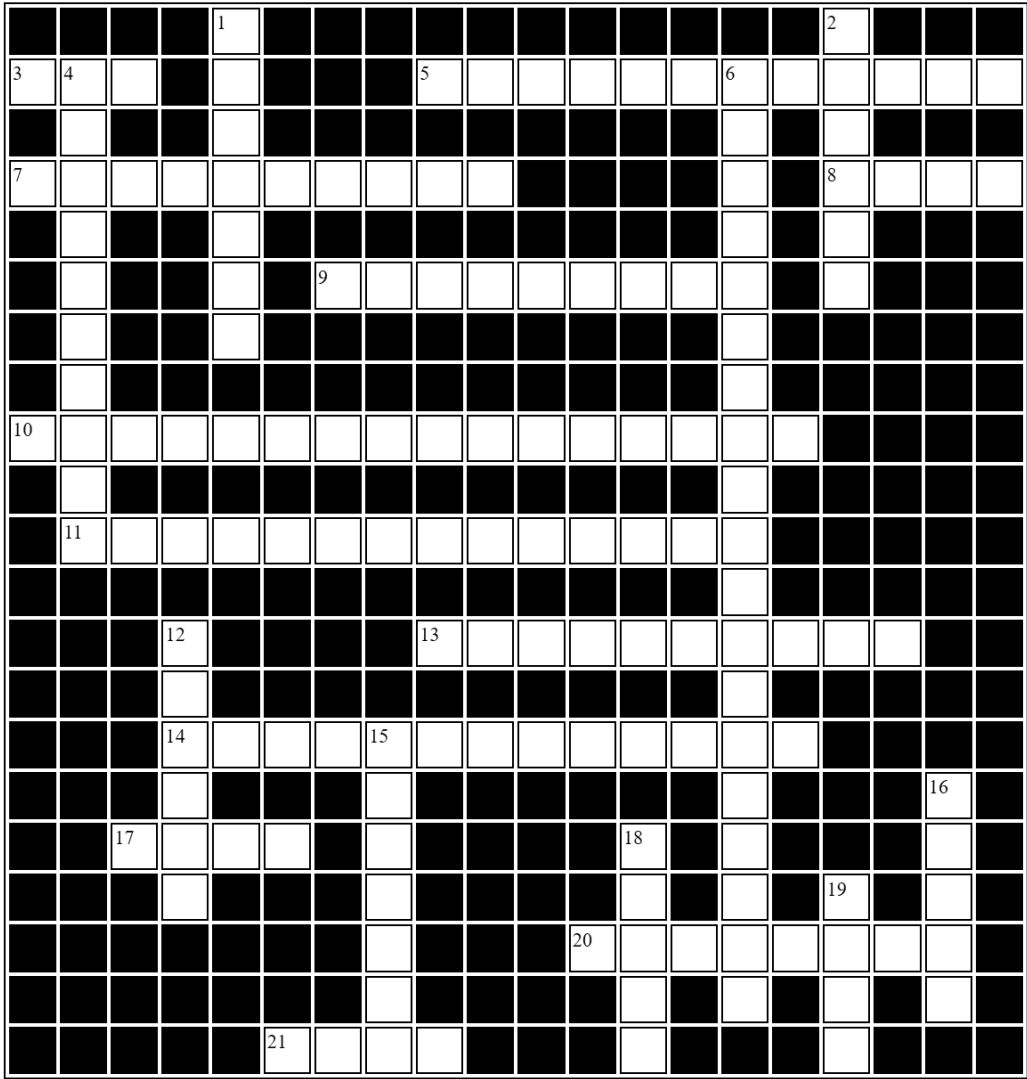
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6. Means the same as acute renal failure
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Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City Kicks off \$2.6 Million ER Expansion Project

Project funded by Oklahoma philanthropist Herman Meinders

Mercy broke ground on a new construction project Friday to expand the emergency department at its hospital in northwest Oklahoma City.

The project will include adding square footage to the ER that will house a much-needed CT scanner and space for more radiology equipment in the future. Patients in the ER needing a CT scan currently must be transported to a different floor in the hospital to get this specialized imaging required for a diagnosis.

"We see about 140 patients every day in our ER, and around 60 of them need a CT scan," said Dr. Lance Watson, department chair of the emergency department at Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City. "This project is so important because the quicker we can get a diagnosis, the quicker we can get patients the treatment they need."

The hospital is an Advanced Comprehensive Stroke Center certified by The Joint Commission, the highest level of stroke certification awarded



Mercy Neurology team with Herman Meinders.

only to hospitals able to treat the most complex stroke cases. This special

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availability of specialized treatments

SEE MERCY page 12

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MERCY

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and staff with the unique training and experience to care for patients who have experienced a stroke.

"For our stroke patients, getting a CT scan that will lead to a diagnosis as quickly as possible is critical to decrease their chances of having long-term disabilities," said Dr. Bryan Van Zandt, Mercy interventional radiologist.

A CT scan is also needed for patients experiencing trauma, abdominal pain, chest pain, migraines and other neurological conditions.

"The hospital was built in the 1970s, long before we had much of the technology we use today in health care," Dr. Watson said. "Our teams do a phenomenal job working together to make our current process as efficient as possible. But there's no doubt having a CT inside the ER will be a huge advancement for patient care."

Nearly two million brain cells die every minute during a stroke until the patient receives treatment which can lead to disability or death. Despite the challenges, Mercy has the fastest door-to-needle time for stroke patients in the state at 27 minutes, compared to the statewide average of 44 minutes. Door-to-needle time describes the interval between the time a patient arrives at the hospital to the time they receive treatment.

When construction is complete, stroke patients will be wheeled straight from the ambulance into the CT scanner.

Funding construction projects and paying for new technology is a challenge for hospitals across the country. According to the American Hospital Association, 68% of hospitals could lose money this year due to pandemic-related financial challenges including increased costs and labor shortages.

Generous local donor Herman Meinders heard about the need for this equipment and stepped up to provide the funding. Meinders donated \$2.6 million to cover the entire cost of the project through Mercy Health Foundation.

"We could not be more grateful to Mr. Meinders for his gift," said Dr. Watson. "His generosity infuses new life into our ER. It's been a tough few years for our co-workers. To know that someone cares enough to fund this critical project will be a huge morale boost for them."

Mercy's Meinders Neuroscience Institute is also named for Herman Meinders. The building houses the Meinders Center for Movement Disorders and its multidisciplinary team of specialists, nurses, physical therapists, speech therapists, home health nurses and advanced practitioners for patients with Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders.



Mo Grotjohn, Herman Meinders and Dr. Richard V. Smith.

Meinders said he wanted to show his appreciation for the neurology program at Mercy and made the donation in honor of retired Mercy neurosurgeon Dr. Richard V. Smith. Dr. Smith was the visionary behind the stroke program, and the new ER suite will be dedicated in his name.

"Herman is the perfect example of philanthropy at its finest," said Lori Cummins, vice president of Mercy Health Foundation Communities. "He

sees a need and asks how he can meet it. His generosity is evident all over the campus of Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City, from the Meinders Neuroscience Institute and Meinders Center for Movement Disorders to the new Love Family Women's Center and now this ER project. People's lives will be changed forever because of him. Herman has been a true blessing to Mercy and those we serve."

OMRF receives \$2.6 million to study mutations connected to skin diseases

The National Institutes of Health has awarded the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation \$2.6 million to unravel how mutations in a single gene connect to skin health.

With the five-year grant, OMRF scientist Lorin Olson, Ph.D., will continue his research on a protein signal called platelet-derived growth factor (PDGF), which plays a key role in the body's ability to repair wounds. But too much PDGF promotes scar tissue formation called fibrosis as well as inflammation, making proper balance key. Olson's research focuses on understanding how PDGF works.

It was previously discovered that mutations in a gene associated with PDGF — PDGFRB — can lead to a pair of rare skin diseases. Penttinen syndrome causes skin to age prematurely, while Kosaki overgrowth syndrome causes cells



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Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist Lorin Olson, Ph.D.



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