2011 ANNUAL REPORT

iCare for America’s Veterans
One of the biggest achievements for VA Butler in 2011 was the outstanding survey results, such as joint commission and CARF. What do you think?

Yes, we did extremely well in all of the external reviews. All staff contributed and all have much to be proud of.

I am also proud of the Telehealth achievements for 2011. Our Clinical Video Telehealth allowed our Veterans to be cared for closer to their homes.

And recall, another success for us this year was the opening of the new Community Living Center (CLC) for our Veteran residents...

I enjoyed watching it all come together.

Me too. It was nice to see the residents interacting with staff in their new home.

Another great event was the annual POW/MIA Luncheon. That group of Veterans is so remarkable.

Their stories are amazing. It is such an honor to meet and visit with them.

It sure is. 2012 will be another exciting year at Butler, especially with the new Domiciliary opening.

We’re all looking forward to opening the new Domiciliary in 2012 and working on more ways to partner with the community to end homelessness.

I plan to fully implement the Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT) model of care in 2012 and become our Veterans’ first choice for primary and specialty care.

I want to accomplish RN movement in the Primary Care setting to that of a Care Manager so they can perform at the top of their scope to provide convenient, thorough care to the Veterans who need us most.
Our Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT) partner with Veterans everyday to plan for whole-person care and life-long health and wellness. VA Butler was recognized as a center of high performance for our PACT teams.

This year we worked toward new goals…

• Complete Primary Care appointments within seven days of desired date (target 90%). We exceeded both VISN 4 and national goals
• Provide same-day access with Primary Care Provider the majority of the time (more frequently than VISN 4 or national)
• Keep continuity for Veterans – make sure they see their own provider at least three out of four visits with a Primary Care Provider (we achieve this in over 90% of our visits)
• Contact Veterans within two days of transition from an inpatient hospital stay. We contacted 5% more Veterans compared to 2010

“My PACT team made phone calls consistently to a Veteran with elevated blood pressure along with post-traumatic stress disorder. As the nurse on his PACT team, I educated him about the importance of taking blood pressure medications, and as a result, he began taking them regularly. The Veteran is a private individual and does not like coming in for visits, but he arranged a face-to-face meeting with me and thanked me for caring. AND, his recent blood pressure reading was 122/70.”

Dawn Jockel MSN, RN, PACT Nurse

1) Agate’s PACT team
2) Sylves’ PACT team
3) Boyle’s PACT team
4) Kumar’s PACT team
...and achieved even higher levels of quality care!

- We addressed medication requests for refills the same-day when possible
- We trained PACT teams to work at the top of their professional license
- We provided a new way of communicating with Veterans through My HealtheVet’s Secure Messaging; thus often eliminating a need for a telephone call or appointment
- We evaluated a Veteran’s need to be seen in a face-to-face visit and used PACT phone calls or telehealth to address their needs and to help eliminate travel (calls increased by 11% since 2010)
- We responded to calls from the Call Center the same day they were received in almost all instances

Veterans worked in partnership with their PACT and with their family members, loved ones or caregivers, and the result was improved patient satisfaction, open communication, and better coordinated care.

“This is our PACT with Veterans – to deliver excellence in every aspect of patient care.”

Robert A. Petzel, MD
VA Under Secretary for Health

5) Jordan’s PACT team
6) Kruczek’s PACT team
7) Gamwo’s PACT team
8) Razin’s PACT team
In support of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010, our Caregiver Support Program helped five families receive the new benefits and support services available for eligible Post 9/11 Veterans in 2011.

Caregiver Nancy Zreliak and her son, Army Veteran Brian Zreliak were the first family to receive some of the new caregiver services offered here and nationally.

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“Caregivers make tremendous sacrifices every day to help Veterans of all eras who served this nation. They are critical partners with VA in the recovery and comfort of ill and injured Veterans, and they deserve our continued training, support and gratitude.”

Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Retired U.S. Army General

In 2011, our Caregiver program also…

- Trained 131 caregivers about our benefits and services
- Thanked caregivers at the second annual Caregiver Luncheon during National Caregiver Month in November (over 30 caregivers attended)
- Initiated in-person and telephone support groups for all-era caregivers
- Supported current and former caregivers as referred through the Caregiver Support Line

The Zreliaks were the first family to receive some of the new caregiver services for caregivers of post-9/11 Veterans.
Three generations of Veterans – Abie Abraham, Joshua Hudson and Will Schlobohm.

Welcome returning service members home

In 2011, we began providing care to our most recent returning service members, Operation New Dawn (OND) Veterans. Together with Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Veterans, we served over 2,000 returning service members this year, over 400 were new VA enrollees.

Our biggest achievement this year was outreach efforts and relationship building with the Department of Defense (DoD). In March 2011, we traveled to Camp Pendleton, CA and met with local Marines returning from Afghanistan. In April 2011, we co-hosted a Post Deployment Health Re-Assessment providing assessments and treatment for returning PA National Guardsmen. About half who attended enrolled in VA care. Our staff provided both pre- and post-deployment in-services throughout the year, and collaborated with DoD active duty programs such as the Wounded Warrior Transition Units and the Marine Wounded Warrior Regiment.

In 2011 our OEF/OIF/OND team also…

- Opened a new OEF/OIF/OND Clinic to provide a friendly and comfortable environment for Veterans, their families and a play center for children
- Attended 25 OEF/OIF/OND outreach events including local colleges, employment events, Yellow Ribbon events, and community activities
- Hosted the fifth Annual Welcome Home Event at the Butler County Fairgrounds in conjunction with the Bantam Jeep Heritage Festival with about 300 Veterans in attendance
Army Veteran Ron Christopher, VA Butler’s Homeless Peer Support Technician, sorts through donations in his office.

“The HUD-VASH program helped make housing affordable for me. My new home is beautiful. I have a nice roomy apartment with a front and back porch and a big back yard. Life couldn’t be better.”

Army Veteran Ron Christopher

Our homeless team worked harder than ever this year to help end Veteran homelessness. Did we make a difference? We certainly did!

- We provided six beds for emergency housing through a new program called Tomorrow’s Hope and 10 beds for transitional housing through the Mechling Shakley Veteran Center
- We utilized 75 housing vouchers for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the VA’s Supported Housing (HUD-VASH) Program
- We offered 470 unique Veterans housing options, 15 were referred by the National Homeless Hotline, (a 14% increase from 2010 and higher than the national average of 11%)
- We held community events to support the homeless community, including our first ever Homeless Stand Down event with over 100 participants. We also participated in the first national VA2K Walk & Roll for Homeless Veterans, held the annual Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups (CHALENG) Forum, hosted a Regional HUD-VASH training, and conducted a Homeless Summit with our community partners
Army Veteran Ron Christopher once suffered from alcohol abuse, depression, and homelessness. With help from the VA, Ron has been sober for over four years now. He participates in the HUD-VASH Program and helps other homeless Veterans at VA Butler Healthcare.

**Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)**

Veterans Justice programs were developed as a homeless prevention measure to provide outreach to Veterans involved in local justice systems and to link those eligible Veterans to appropriate services provided through VA. Our Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Program helped close to 400 Veterans in 2011. We also hosted the PA Probation, Parole and Community Corrections (PAPPC) Association Meeting, built partnerships with the corrections community, and educated law enforcement about the VJO program for justice-involved Veterans.

Looking ahead to 2012, the Butler County Probation Office will designate one probation officer for all identified Veterans involved in the local justice system and Butler County is looking to establish a Veterans Treatment Court.

**Suicide Prevention**

This year VA rebranded the National Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline (1.800.273.8255). An important component of this was a new name: Veterans Crisis Line. The Veterans Crisis Line is available 24/7/365 to provide confidential counseling and referrals for Veterans and their families.

We participated in 72 outreach events for Suicide Prevention, sent out monthly We Care cards to all Veterans on the facility’s high risk for suicide list, and presented Tracking the Follow-up of VISN 4 Veteran’s at High Risk For Suicide – A Tool for Suicide Prevention at the fifth VHA National Mental Health Conference.
iExpand
health services to women Veterans

“Because there are more female Veterans, and since the needs of women Veterans are ever-changing, VA Butler is making efforts to focus on providing better health care for female Veterans. VA Butler has expanded Veteran care in many avenues in the Outpatient Clinics, including radiology, podiatry services, etc. My goal is to be instrumental in assisting in meeting these needs.”

Barbara Kirsch, MSN, ACNP-BC

“This facility [VA Butler] is growing in leaps and bounds… everything is coming here, which is nice.”

Army Veteran Judy Ann Bellefleur

Better communication, more care services, and soon… more space! We are continually improving and expanding care for our women Veterans. In 2011, our women Veterans health care program:

- Established a Women’s Health Clinic Suite in Primary Care to include a designated women’s health exam room with an adjoining bathroom
- Appointed Women Veterans Program Manager Liaisons at all five VA Outpatient Clinics, and throughout the main facility to provide information and answer any questions about women’s health care
- Hired a full-time women’s health provider at the Michael A. Marzano Outpatient Clinic (Mercer) and a part-time Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner for women’s health at the main facility
- Worked on Domiciliary rooms just for women Veterans (when completed, rooms will have keyless entry, private rooms, and bathrooms) – first time ever!
- Increased the number of enrolled women Veterans by 60 this year for a total of 1,084

Engineering Technician Jude Sperdute (center) leads a tour of the construction site for VA Butler’s new Domiciliary.
MOVE!, the national weight management program for Veterans that focuses on healthy lifestyle changes, saw major growth and expansion in 2011. For one thing, the MOVE! Group Program added classes at VA Outpatient Clinics due to the high volume of referrals.

In fiscal year 2011, 389 Veterans participated in two or more sessions of the eight-week MOVE! Group Program (participants doubled from 2010) for a total weight loss of 1,925 pounds and 357 inches lost from their waistlines.

TeleMOVE!

In April 2010, we were first in VISN 4 to institute the TeleMOVE! Program and in 2011, became the first facility in the VISN to meet the target enrollment of 55 Veterans. Since meeting this target, VA Butler’s TeleMOVE! Program has exceeded the enrollment goal. In FY 2011, 110 Veterans participated in TeleMOVE! with a total weight loss of nearly 500 pounds.

New in 2011!

MOVE! Telephone Lifestyle Coaching (TLC) Program

We were the first in VISN 4 to adopt this program and eight Veterans enrolled in its first month alone! Similar to TeleMOVE!, TLC can be worked around Veterans’ busy schedules. Veterans learn at their own pace and receive calls from a healthy lifestyle coach who offers support and guidance to keep them on track in their self-management of weight.

Health Promotion & Disease Prevention (HPDP)

In 2011, the national Healthy Living Messages campaign launched to reinforce positive lifestyle behaviors. The Healthy Living Messages are currently being presented monthly on Veteran Connection – VA Butler Healthcare’s new, local cable show. What else was the HPDP program up to in 2011?

- Trained over 80 employees with TEACH for Success—a program based on patient-centered communication, health education, health coaching, and partnering skills
- Initiated weekly “Health & Wellness” Facebook notes on VA Butler’s Facebook page, posting 46 notes in 2011
- Organized several key events, including: MOVE! Your Way into a Healthier New Year Event, National Wear Red Day, two farmers’ markets and several Healthy Living Events
In 2011 we helped 1,315 Veterans with our telehealth programs. And, not only did we meet but, we EXCEEDED all of our Telehealth goals which ensured VISN 4 met its overall goal. Our Home Telehealth helped 298 Veterans (285 target), 1,390 Veteran encounters (602 target) were provided via Clinical Video Telehealth, and 728 Veteran encounters (target 450) via Store-and-Forward Telehealth.

- Our **Home Telehealth** began using Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology, which allowed Veterans with cell phones to participate in the program. Home Telehealth was also integrated into Patient Aligned Care Teams this year. Veterans using Home Telehealth increased by 36% from 2010.

- Our **Clinical Video Telehealth** established a strong behavioral health presence in 2011, including PTSD, Substance Abuse, and Smoking Cessation programs. Tele-pharmacy was also initiated at the VA Outpatient Clinics to provide Anticoagulation Therapy. Veterans using Clinical Video Telehealth increased from 39 in 2010 to 1,390 in 2011 for a 3,460% increase!

Army Veteran William Eichner uses the telehealth program called TeleMOVE!

The TeleMOVE! Program allows Veterans to conduct their weight loss journey by committing to logging on a messaging device daily.

“It [home telehealth device] makes me more responsible, like making sure to watch what I eat,” he said. “It’s a motivation tool right at home.”

Army Veteran William Eichner
• Our Store-and-Forward Telehealth received a Federal Executive Board Gold Award along with VA Pittsburgh for the success of the joint Teledermatology Program. The program has created an estimated savings of $90,000 in fee basis dermatology consults this fiscal year.

And, it keeps transforming…

We’re on our way to initiate Tele-clergy, Tele-women’s health, Tele-speech, and the use of equipment in the Home-Based Primary Care Program for video home visits for Veterans. We also plan to expand Tele-pharmacy at all the VA Outpatient Clinics, provide Teledermatology at all of the VA Outpatient Clinics and explore using Teledermatology for pressure wound care.

Working together with the VISN Telehealth Coordinator and the VA medical centers in Altoona and Lebanon Pennsylvania, we will soon provide Clinical Video Telehealth to Tomorrow’s Hope (a homeless housing support program). This will enable each facility to provide continued support to homeless Veterans who are residing there, and significantly reduce the expense of transporting them to their home facilities for care and treatment.

“The technology is helpful because it allows health care professionals to assist Veterans right in their homes. It is especially beneficial for Veterans who work or may have transportation issues.”

Susan Leslie, Registered Dietitian, TeleMOVE! Care Coordinator

1) Store-and-Forward Telehealth
2) Health Buddy equipment at work
3) TeleMOVE! Care Coordinator Susan Leslie
In a society filled with text messaging and tweets, we want information and we want it now! This year we provided even more ways for Veterans to get the information they want and need 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – whether that is chatting over the phone, online, or even on television!

“We are so proud that VA Butler Healthcare has remained in the top five nationally in IPAs for several years in a row.”

Anne Mikolajczak, Corporate Compliance & Community Relations Manager

“Secure messaging is a great alternative to the traditional phone call. It is great for quick questions regarding prescriptions, appointments, or follow ups on lab work. It is a more convenient way to communicate for me because messages can be sent and received when convenient versus the alternative phone calls which sometimes turn into ‘phone tag.’”

Amanda Walling
Army Reserves Veteran

My HealtheVet’s Secure Messaging

Veterans that are registered with My HealtheVet and have an upgraded account are now using Secure Messaging to communicate with their health care team. It is a privacy protected message service through the My HealtheVet portal. We were the first facility in VISN 4 to begin using Secure Messaging with all of our Primary Care Teams, including VA Outpatient Clinics.

Secure Messaging is the newest feature of My HealtheVet, VA’s online personal health record. Our My HealtheVet program reached the 4,000 in person authentication (IPA) mark in August 2011; the first to reach this milestone in VISN 4. Our fourth place position nationally for IPAs is a result of our team of committed My HealtheVet Champions who talk up My HealtheVet’s 24/7 online access to VA for Secure Messaging, tracking health, documenting military and family history, checking lab results, receiving wellness reminders (i.e., health care screenings), viewing appointments, and so much more. With My HealtheVet, Veterans can experience one-click-away health care!
Our website is one of the most proactive websites in the VA system. We provide Veterans multiple access points to receive information, such as brochures, forms, feature stories, MP3 podcasts, and more. Since its first significant redesign in January 2009, the website has quadrupled its quarterly visits. In fiscal year 2011, we had over 94,000 visits – that’s a 43% visit increase compared to last year.

Social Media  facebook.com/vabutlerpa  twitter.com/vabutlerpa

Our Veterans are using social media, so we are too! Our Facebook page has well over 500 fans and was listed as a top hospital Facebook page nationally in 2011 by UbiCare, a tool that provides research-based health information for social media sites. Our Twitter feed is in the top 20 nationally for VA with over 400 followers and 700 tweets. VA Butler Healthcare’s social media forums provide daily posts and tweet on health related and VA-specific content, links, images, and videos that allow our Veterans to learn, interact, and chat with us every day.

Veteran Connection

This year we partnered with Armstrong Cable to bring Veterans a new, local cable television show – Veteran Connection. This monthly cable show features Veteran guests and VA employees talking about the information and hot topics important to our Veterans today. The first episode aired in November 2011 and we’re looking forward to more great episodes in 2012!

How can you chat with us on television? Send an email to vetconnect@zoominternet.net and our Director will read your message and answer questions on an upcoming episode.

Podcasts  talkshoe.com/pc/85029

We provided Veterans, their families and friends, as well as employees a fresh, real-time way to learn about VA Butler Healthcare programs and services through monthly Brown Bag Lunch Chat streaming audio podcasts. Our podcasts are the first of their kind in VISN 4 and we are an early adopter in VA as well. Each podcast generates approximately 5-10 live listeners with an average of 1-2 call in questions per podcast from listeners.

Outreach

Nearly 4,000 Veterans participated in more than 50 health fairs and outreach events held in 2011, and over 3,000 attended VA Butler’s fall flu clinics (a 61% increase from 2010 for a total of 2,828 newly enrolled Veterans). Some of the events included Wings Over Pittsburgh, Lawrence County’s CareerLink Veteran Seminars, Bantam Jeep Heritage Festival, local college events, and various Veteran Service Organization visits.

We also expanded our health fairs to include the following programs: Bone Density Screenings, Diabetic Blood Screenings, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Screenings, Sleep Apnea, MOVE!, Body Mass Index Screenings, Health Promotion & Disease Prevention, Agent Orange/Vietnam Veteran, Behavioral Health, OEF/OIF/OND, Women Veteran Program, My HealthVet, Homelessness, Vocational Rehabilitation, Blood Pressure Screenings, and Pharmacy.
VA Butler Healthcare’s employees dedicate their time everyday to provide the best possible service, care, and support to Veterans. This year, VA adopted Core Values known as ICARE (Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect and Excellence); VA Butler’s 626 employees embrace these values every day, all year long.

- **VA2K.** In support of employee wellness month, 133 employees participated in the first ever nationwide VA2K Walk & Roll event to benefit homeless Veterans. Employees, along with Veterans, volunteers, and the community joined forces to raise nearly $800 in donations for local homeless Veterans.

- **Pink Out.** VA Butler Healthcare employees joined together for the first ever Pink Out to support National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October.

- **Combined Federal Campaign.** VA Butler employees kicked off The 3 Rivers/PA West Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) on October 1, 2011. With a goal to raise $60,000, we exceeded our goal and raised $60,704.02! This is the third year in a row we’ve exceeded our goal.

- **All Employee Survey 2011.** All Employee Survey participation rate was 92.5%, the second highest in VISN 4 and well above the national average.

2011 Award Winning Employees

- **2011 Excellence in Government FEB Awards – Gold Award Winners**
  Kim Ripper, Aaron Boyer, Beverly Olenic and our Tele-dermatology Team - Nancy Kummer, Robert Malec, Doreen Zablotsky, Emily Konar, Mary Spencer, Amanda Walling and Paul Rude. We also took home eight silver awards, 16 bronze awards, and one bronze team award

- **2011 FEB Woman of the Year Awards – Silver Award Winners**
  Joanne Moncello, Ruthann Pickerd and Lorri Yerkins. Our women also took home eight bronze awards

- **2011 Cameos of Caring® Award**
  Ann Druschel

- **FY 2011 First Place System Redesign Champion Award**
  Our Telephone Access to Care System Redesign Team - Dawn Staph, Faith Barber, Doreen Zablotsky, Tina Hess, Kim Ripper and Dr. William K. Nowotny

- **2011 Frontline Impact Award**
  Marne Bilanich and Danielle Weisenstein

- **2011 Golden Triangle Awards – Honor Award Communication Creative – Publication Design**
  Our Community Relations Team - Anne Mikolajczak, Amanda Wilczynski, Lauren Heiger and Joshua Hudson took home the award for our 2010 Annual Report
iVolunteer
my time for Veterans

VA Butler Healthcare’s **561** volunteers in 2011 assisted at the main facility and all of the VA Outpatient Clinics with **47,488** hours of their time. This year, VA Butler’s Voluntary Services received **$259,233.20** in donations for our Veterans.

What else did our Voluntary Service do?

- Participated in the first Annual Bantam Jeep Heritage Festival. We hosted an on-site luncheon for WWII Veterans who were the first to use the Bantam Jeep, created in Butler County, PA. Volunteers and Veteran Service Organizations supported the luncheon. Authentic WWII Bantam jeeps and replicas of jeeps were on campus twice for all to enjoy.

- Created a new program to enhance the National Salute to Veterans Patients Week – **Lunch Date with a Veteran**. Our Nutrition Kitchen prepared a special meal for inpatient Veterans and their “dates” and ladies from the Butler County Symphony played music for the event. Eighteen Veterans attended this first-ever event, and we’re looking forward to it again in 2012.

- Placed a Rural Health Van in Armstrong County with three volunteer drivers. Volunteer drivers helped transport **2,855** Veterans to medical appointments with 12,490 driver hours this year.

- Received a volunteer from the Wounded Warrior Transition Program, Melvin Shick, OEF/OIF service member to assist with the Volunteer Transportation Program.

“Volunteering was one of the best things I did with my life and I really enjoy it. The Veterans have become my second family.”  

*Gertrude Zima, VA Butler Healthcare Volunteer*

Gertrude Zima has been volunteering at VA Butler for 34 years. She helps with recreation activities such as bingo.
iBuild
promises for Veterans

“VA Butler Healthcare has been caring for our Nation’s heroes since 1937. I am proud of their rich history and the exciting future that this new construction and modernization will provide to those who are served in our new Community Living Center.”

Michael E. Moreland, FACHE
Network Director, VA Healthcare – VISN 4

Community Living Center

VA Butler’s newly constructed Community Living Center (CLC) is being built in three phases. Soon Veterans will move in and enjoy private bedrooms with internet access, a study, and a private bath. The completed CLC will include 60 private rooms, a game room, computer room, a spa room for therapeutic programs, and much more.

In fall 2011, we completed phases one and two of the new CLC and moved half of our Veterans into the new space. We also began work on the Atrium (similar to a sunroom) that will provide natural light all year long for our Veteran residents to enjoy.

Domiciliary

We are continuing construction of the new Domiciliary, including a new gazebo for outdoor activities. Completion is expected in late spring of 2012, and when finished, will provide temporary housing for up to 56 Veterans, including women Veterans (for the first time ever!). All Veterans in the new Domiciliary will have a dining area, kitchen, laundry room, and furnished bedrooms and bathrooms.

Health Care Center

In 2011, we continued to work on the Health Care Center (HCC). The HCC will provide us with state-of-the-art health care space to consolidate outpatient services and meet increased patient demand. Preliminary design is complete and we are expecting to award the lease for the HCC in April 2012 with construction following and activation in 2013.

1) Mr. Moreland and Navy Veteran Pamela Bell at the CLC ribbon cutting ceremony
2) Domiciliary construction progresses
3) Army Veteran Dominic Digiammarino in his newly constructed CLC room
Events

CLC Ribbon Cutting Ceremony • Nurses Week • POW/MIA Annual Ceremony

WWII Bantam Jeep Parade • First Homeless Stand Down Event • Volunteer Picnic

CFC Kick-off Luncheon • Pink Out for Breast Cancer Awareness • VA2K Walk & Roll
18,424 VETERANS SERVED
626 EMPLOYEES
561 VOLUNTEERS
47,488 VOLUNTEER HOURS
42 UNIVERSITY AFFILIATIONS
163 OPERATING BEDS
153,668 OUTPATIENT VISITS
$108,083,000 OPERATING BUDGET

6 NATIONAL ACCREDITATIONS
Both non-government and government agencies who oversee the safety and quality of health care reviewed and accredited VA Butler Healthcare

25 out of 26 QUALITY OF CARE MEASURES MET
We exceeded performance when compared to private health plans on 25 out of 26 measures for Behavioral Health, Diabetes, Ischemic Heart Disease and Prevention Management. We will use these results to continue to make improvements in our quality of care and service.

iCare
for America’s Veterans
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