

HHS Interoperability Mandate

A Reaction from Healthcare Leaders

Public Version



Reaction
— Data —

Introduction

The largest seismic event since the initial HITECH legislation is about to hit the healthcare industry. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently proposed a rule that, in their words, will “support seamless and secure access, exchange, and use of electronic health information”. This rule is being termed the “information blocking rule” by many in the industry.

Because of the material impact this information blocking rule will have primarily on healthcare provider organizations and secondarily on healthcare IT vendors, we launched research in mid-February 2020 to healthcare decision makers and influencers. We wanted to understand how these healthcare providers and executives feel about the information blocking rule including...

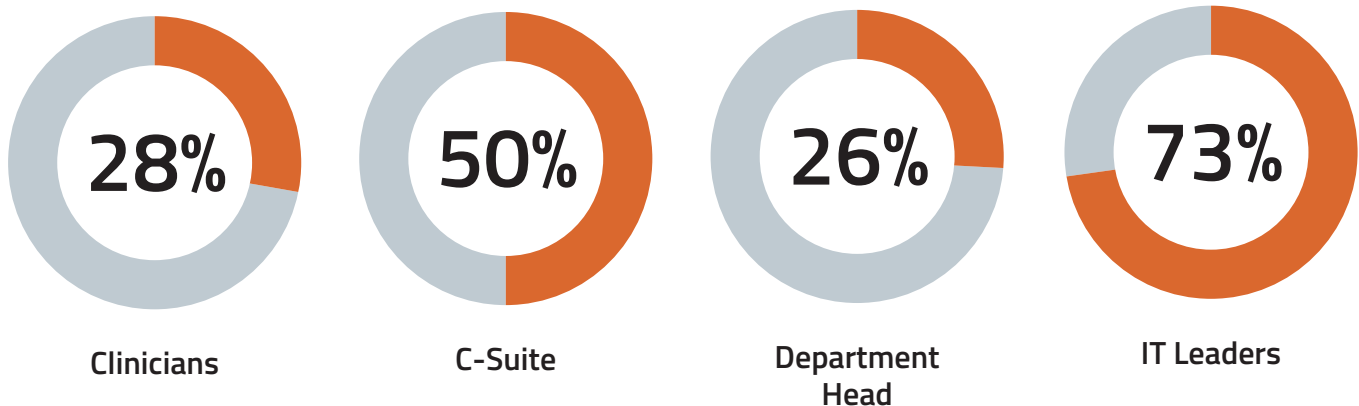
- Their level of awareness of the rule
- Their level of support for the rule
- Which entities should control access to a patient’s information
- Under what scenarios should patients have little-to-no control over their own information

Their interest was significant as we received feedback from nearly 180 healthcare professionals in just a few days.

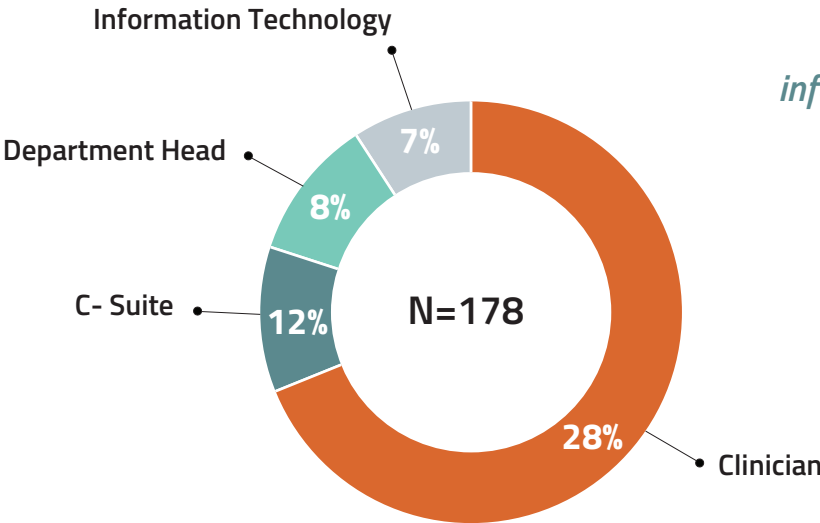
This is what they told us...

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Awareness of New Interoperability Mandate



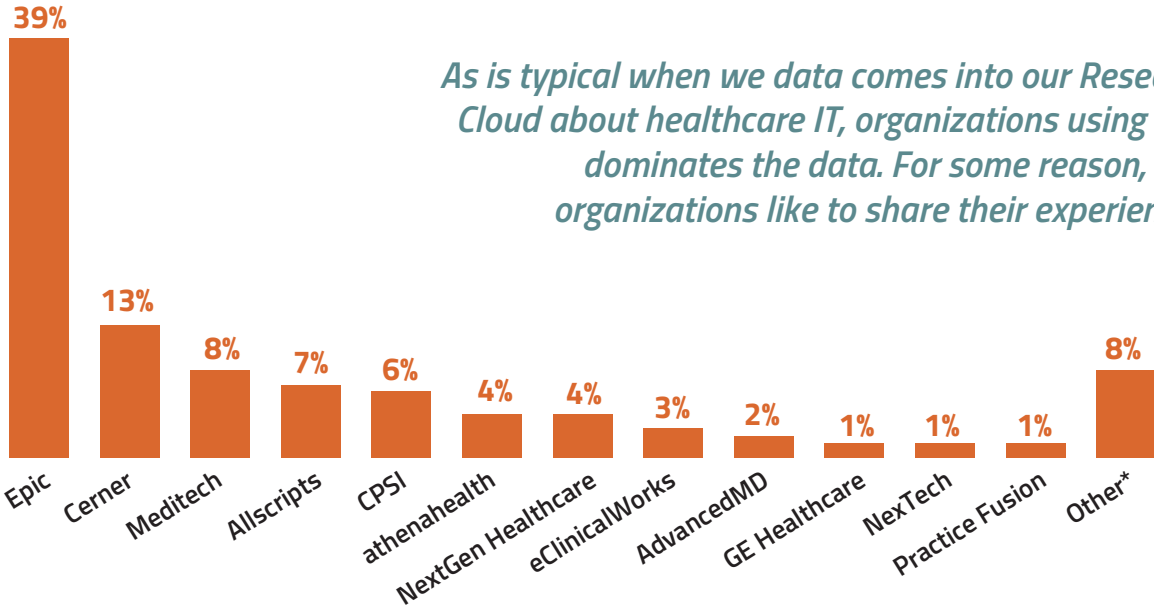
Demographics



It was important to get information from across the continuum of decision makers and influencers.

*Department Head includes: Nurse Directors, Pharmacy Directors, Surgery Directors, HIM Directors, Lab Directors, Imaging Directors

Core IT Vendor Used by Participating Organizations



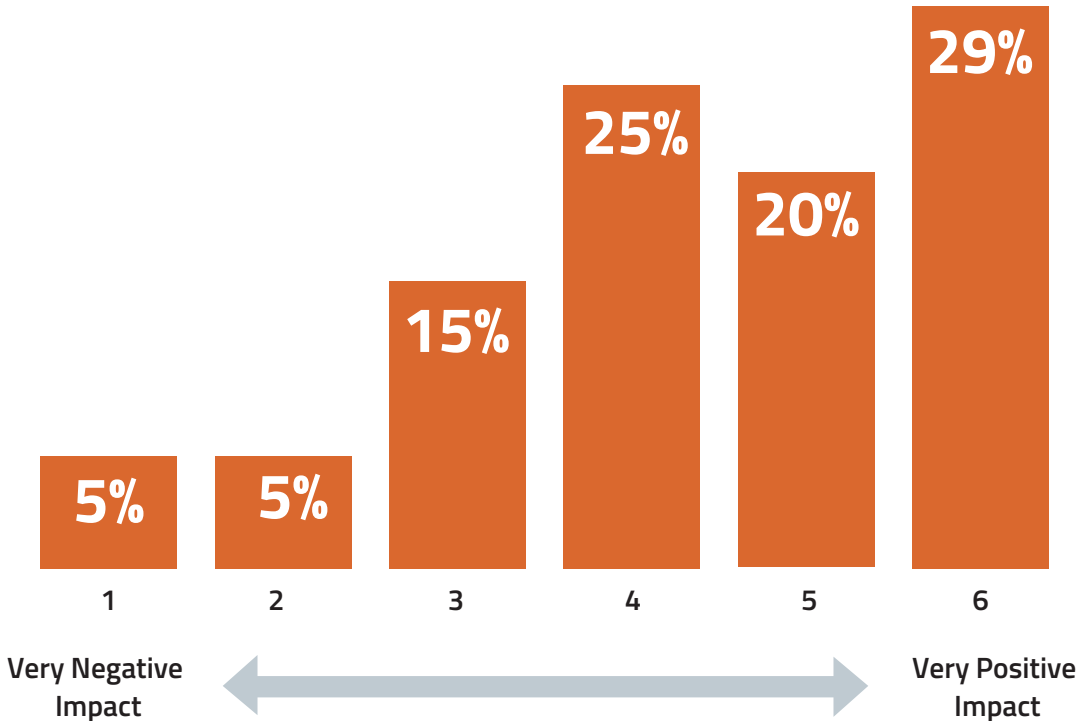
As is typical when we data comes into our Research Cloud about healthcare IT, organizations using Epic dominates the data. For some reason, Epic organizations like to share their experiences.

*Other includes: AccuCare, Arete, Greenway, Modernizing Medicine, OfficeAlly, Practice Partners, Quantum

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Overall Impact

Impact of Interoperability Mandate



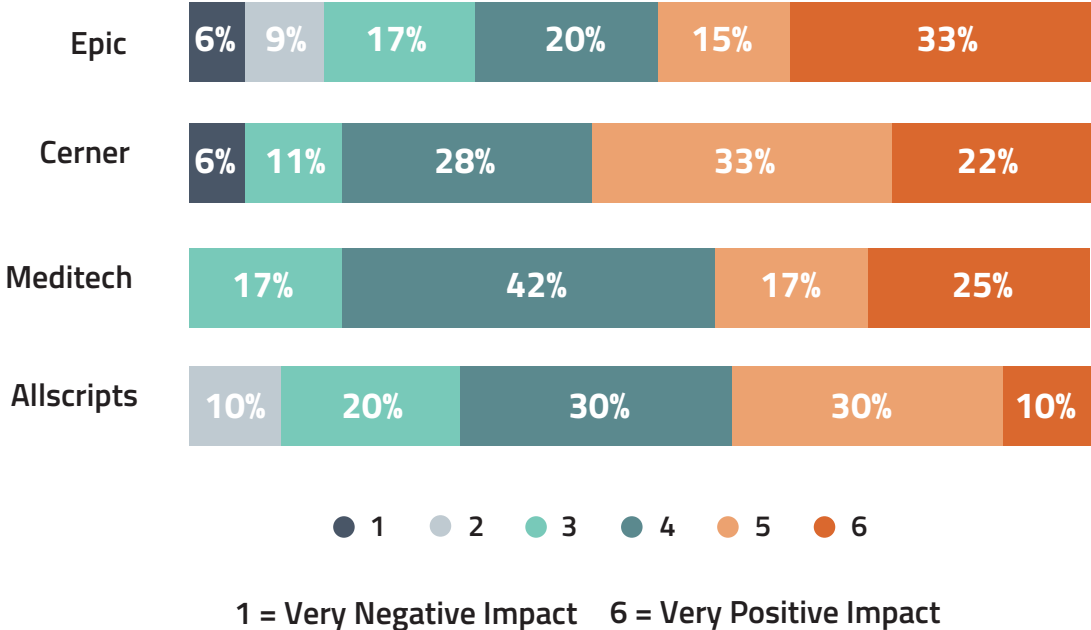
75% of healthcare professionals tip the scales towards eliminating the barriers to interoperability and improving access to patient information. This is to be expected

"I think on the surface the ability for greater access to information is a great thing. The problem is that even with the question is whether the rule is well thought out enough and has enough safeguards in place to not make it both onerous for those who have to provide the information and secure for patients. It could open up a bit of the wild west if not implemented well." -CIO, Children's Hospital.

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Overall Impact

Impact by EHR Vendor



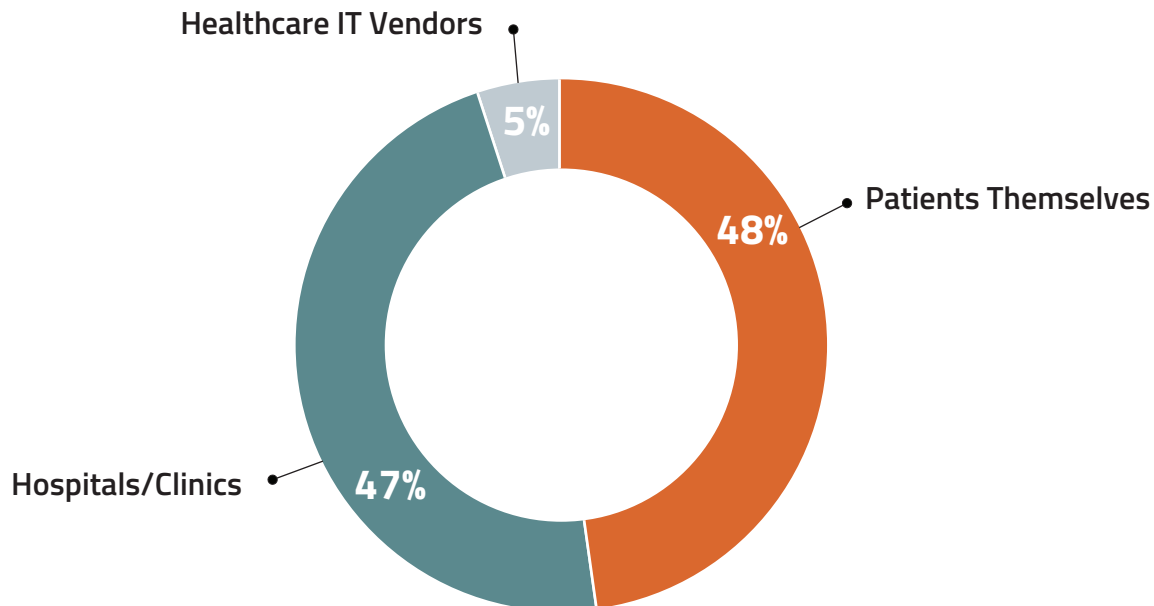
Provider organizations using Epic are more in favor of the HHS ruling than are any other organizations. Given the majority of Epic’s customers are larger, more complex health systems, with patients flowing in and out at high rates, this makes sense. A few comments (out of dozens) we received give some context to the data:

- *“EHR companies have used the Obamacare promises to build wide moats for themselves to the detriment of patients and their caregivers. It is about time that this pendulum starts swinging the other way.” -Neurosurgeon, IDN*
- *“Epic’s acting like an out of control monopoly.” -CIO, Academic Medical Center*
- *“1. ALL EHR companies should be required to use standard format for all medical data. More useful for population data analysis. 2. Patients should NOT be required to re-enter data in doctors offices that is considered past history that doesn't change. WASTE OF PATIENT'S TIME! 3. Patient record should be available on smart phone or flash drive that can be downloaded to any Doctor or Hospital as needed.” -Orthopedic Surgeon, Multi-specialty Clinic*

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Controlling Patient Information

Who Should Control Access to Patient Information



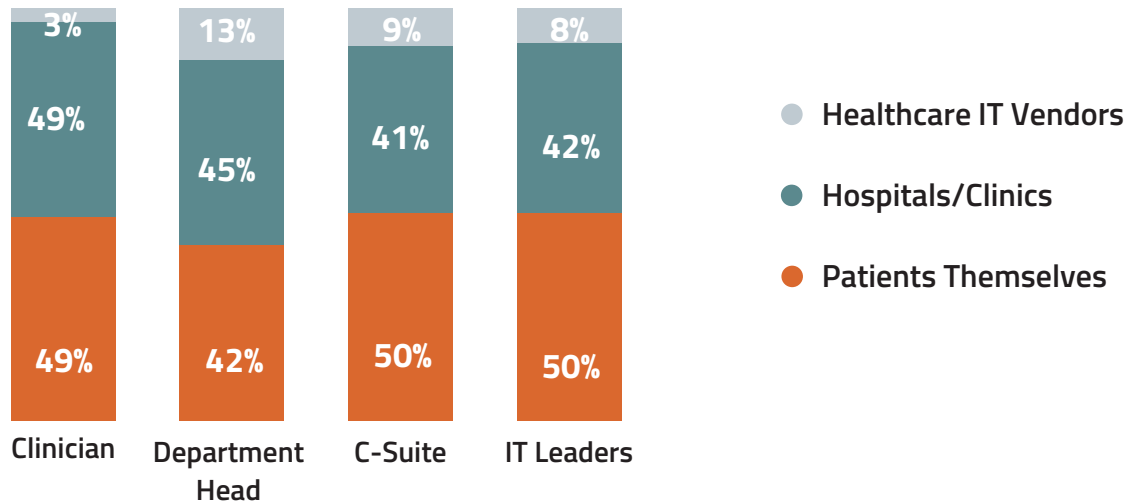
The belief that patients should have little-to-no say in the access of their own information is, thankfully, shared by very few in the healthcare industry, as evidenced by the data in this chart. In every other industry, the consumer is becoming King/Queen of their own data and healthcare will not be exempt from this trend. Consumerism in healthcare is coming - it's unavoidable.

"I think it is their right to have access to their information. It may create more questions but if healthcare providers are honest and doing a good job, they should have nothing to fear." -Director of Nursing, IDN

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Controlling Patient Information

Controlling Access to Patient Information by Role



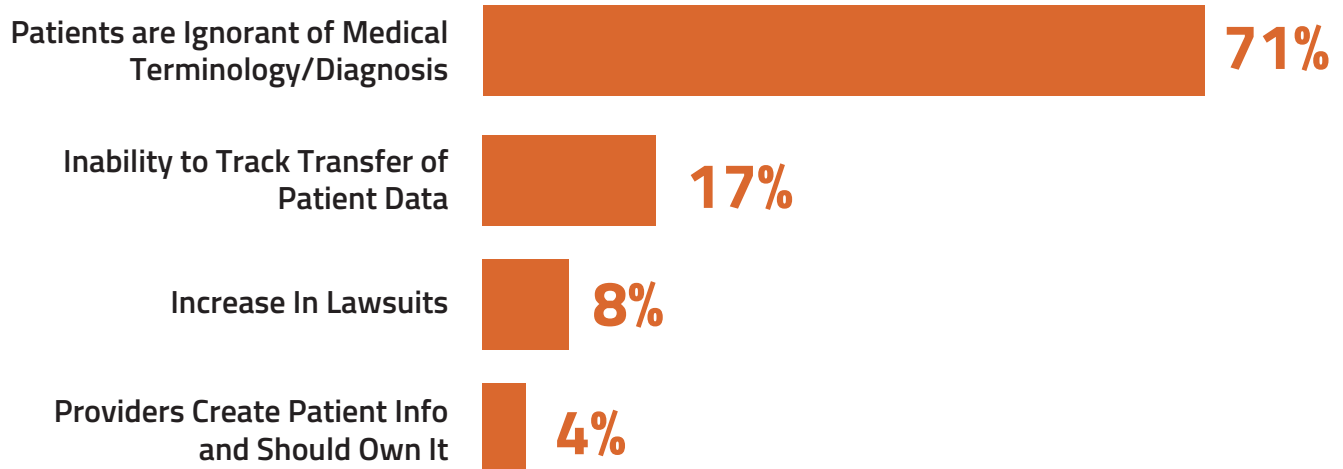
Nurses and Physicians are more opposed to IT vendors involvement/control over process of patients and providers accessing health information. The countless comments we received from clinicians were incredibly intense in tone. Below are a few examples.

- *“IT companies should be under strict regulations that prevent data harvesting. EMR/PM companies should also be under strict regulations that prevent them from having control of the platform. Clouds that serve as the home for the platform should be accessible only through a key that is controlled by the healthcare entity.” - Orthopedic Surgeon, Academic Medical Center*
- *“EHR vendors should be forced to use a standard data table; this would allow simple EHR vendor changes when desired by physicians. Furthermore, ONLY the patient should be in control of their own data and how it is used for anything other than their own care.” - Ophthalmologist, Clinic*
- *“Patients should have access to their health information (though not necessarily our personal records such as notes, etc, as those are owned by the clinic). Patients will also benefit once various healthcare providers (hospitals, clinics, urgent care centers, etc) allow for ready sharing of medical information.” - Pediatrician, Specialty Clinic*
- *“EHR companies have used the Obamacare promises to build wide moats for themselves to the detriment of patients and their caregivers. It is about time that this pendulum starts swinging the other way.” - Pediatrician, Specialty Clinic*

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Controlling Patient Information

Why Patients Shouldn't Have Any Control Over Their Information



*Data in this chart are only from participants who said patients should not have control over their information.

Data without context and color can be misleading or, at minimum, can be rather trite. We wanted to give a voice to the small minority who said that patients themselves should have no rights in terms of accessing or controlling their information. This chart highlights the clarification given by those who didn't think patients should've have any control.

It's very important to note (again) that this group of providers only represents a scant 5% of the participant pool. We included a few sample comments below:

- *"There is no mechanism to prove that they are the ones accessing it without some identification mechanism. Policies in place right now via hospitals/clinics seems to work quite well, at least in Indiana."*
-Emergency Medicine Physician, Research Hospital
- *"Information in EHR notes not only could prove detrimental to patients but will increase patients ability to malingering and manipulate physicians in drug seeking They will be able to see documentation of subtle clues documented in EHR and not only modifying their behavior elsewhere but I can already see them suing and accusing of making facts up."* -Chief Medical Officer, Multi-specialty Clinic

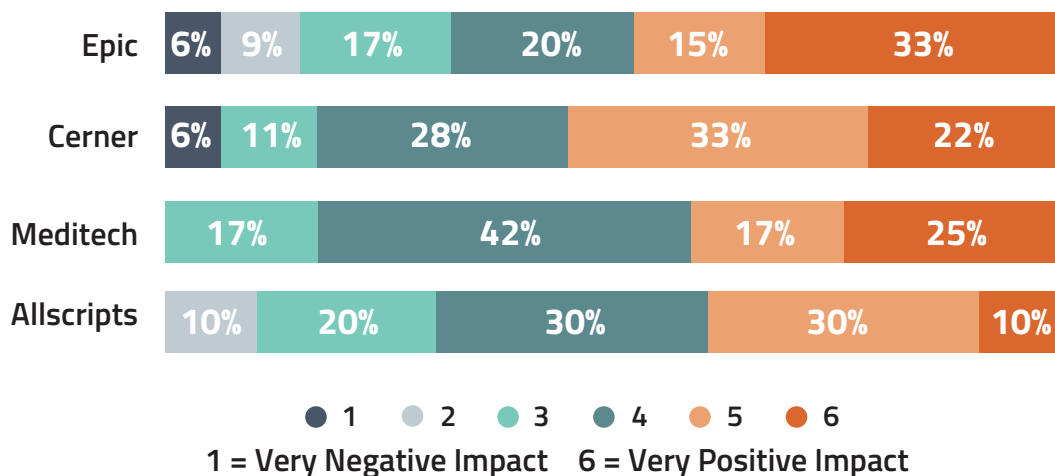
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Conclusion

Consumerism is coming to healthcare. The rising generation of patients come with an expectation that their data is, by definition, theirs just as it is in nearly every other aspect of their lives. In addition, every clinician has experienced (serious) frustration when requesting the information for a new patient from another organization and waiting days, weeks, or longer, to get that information. The result? Inefficiency, duplicate tests, and the like has led to a poor experience for everyone directly involved - patients, clinicians, support staff - being the norm rather than the exception.

One of the more intriguing findings in this research is that the vast majority of Epic hospitals are in favor with the information blocking rule which places them at odds with Epic’s vocal opposition to the rule in its present form. Epic, along with Cerner, Allscripts, Meditech, and all the other pertinent health IT vendors, will have no choice but to adapt to this new world. And if this rule becomes the law of the land, so to speak, every hospital and clinic will need to rely on their core IT vendors to help them comply and move forward. And just when we thought healthcare disruption was going to take a breather for a while...

Impact | By EHR Vendor



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