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Federal Inquiry Opened Into 'Fake' Hospital

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A federal commission of a dozen health care officials started checking an Ivanovo hospital accused by a local doctor of faking an impressive display for a visit by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin last month, Interfax reported.

The commission, which was to carry out its inspection Monday and Tuesday, planned to check the allegations made by doctor Ivan Khrenov during Putin's call-in show Thursday that the hospital had installed borrowed equipment, replaced patients with staff workers and ordered nurses to lie about their salaries.

Khrenov also was summoned to the Ivanovo region prosecutor's office to be questioned in connection with a check opened by local officials Friday.

Health and Social Development Minister Tatyana Golikova expressed doubt that the hospital could have borrowed medical equipment from other hospitals for Putin's visit, saying Monday that it was installed back in 2009, Interfax reported.

Late Friday, Putin personally called Khrenov, who had expressed fears about being fired or assaulted in "a dark alley," to ask whether he was being “pressured” or faced physical attack, RIA-Novosti reported.

“Don't worry. We won't leave you in trouble,” Putin was quoted as saying, adding that Khrenov could call him if he faced any problems.

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