

Moscow's Laid-Off Medical Staff to Get Additional Compensation

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The health care reform has attracted much criticism and protests from health workers, including a thousands-strong rally earlier this month.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said that the city will pay an extra 200,000 to 500,000 rubles (\$4,300–\$10,800) to each of the doctors and nurses who are being laid off amid a health care reform that has seen large-scale shutdowns of the capital's clinics.

Sobyenin said that the city would also fund advanced postgraduate medical training for those doctors who decide to take it, and pay out a stipend of 30,000 rubles a month for the duration of their studies, Interfax reported Tuesday.

"These are people who have spent decades working for the city's health care system, and we are obliged to help them," he was quoted as saying.

The one-off payments for laid-off health workers will be paid on top of the compensation they are entitled to under Russian labor law, and the amount will depend on the employee's level, varying from 200,000 rubles for nursing assistants to 500,000 rubles for doctors,

Sobyanin was cited by Interfax as saying.

The health care reform has attracted much criticism and protests from health workers, including a thousands-strong rally earlier this month.

City officials argue that their reform is intended to optimize the effectiveness of the health care system by merging smaller medical clinics that lack a full range of services with larger hospitals, or closing them altogether. Critics have said that the project is motivated by a striving for profit, rather than for effectiveness.

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