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Head Doctor of Far Eastern Hospital Fired After Death of Patient

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The fired head doctor, Alexander Kondrashkin, denied any wrongdoing in an interview with the Gazeta.ru news website.

The head doctor of a hospital in Russia's Far East has been fired following reports that an elderly man died at the hospital while doctors were distracted by a visit from the local mayor, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday, citing local officials.

"The decision [to fire the head doctor] was made by the governor of the Primorye region Pavel Serebryakov," spokespeople for the regional administration were cited by Interfax as saying Tuesday.

A media storm broke last week when the relatives of the 68-year-old patient posted a video online showing medical staff apparently paying no attention to the man. The man's family claimed the doctors were instead focusing on Vladimir Novikov, the mayor of the town of Artyom where the incident took place, who was visiting the hospital that day.

Local police have launched an investigation into the incident, along with the local prosecutor's office and Roszdravnadzor, Russia's health watchdog. Serebryakov promised to take the case under his personal control, Interfax reported.

Spokespeople for the Artyom town administration said that Novikov had only spent 15 minutes in the hospital and had not interfered with doctors' work, the report said. Novikov himself said he was prepared to sue the media “for defamation.”

The fired head doctor, Alexander Kondrashkin, denied any wrongdoing in an interview with the Gazeta.ru news website. He said he would fight to restore his reputation, and claimed there had been five doctors treating the deceased, who was suffering from a terminal illness.

Kondrashkin said that the mayor was not in the hospital on an official visit, and that while he was there he had talked to another doctor who had nothing to do with the dying patient.

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