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Death Rate in Russian Hospitals Spikes After Number of Beds Slashed

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Dmitry Grishkin / Vedomosti

The number of deaths in Russian hospitals increased in 2015 despite a massive reduction in the amount of hospital beds available, the independent Health Foundation reported Friday. The number of patients in the country's hospitals decreased by 817,000 people in 2015, the report said, whereas the number of deaths grew by 24,000.

The reason behind the worrying trend is a reduction in the amount of hospital beds, which led to decreased access to medical care, according to Health Foundation head Eduard Gavrilov. Since 2013, more than 141,000 beds were cut in hospitals all over the country; as a result, many patients were unable to access medical care in time.

The situation is worse in rural areas, the report says, where beds were cut in specialized hospital departments, such as cardiological and neurological. Patients who suffer heart attacks and strokes are treated in therapeutic departments that don't provide specialized medical care.

The highest hospital-death rates were registered in the Murmansk, Kursk, Penza, Perm, Vologda, Tyumen and Krasnodar regions, as well as in the republic of Karelia and the republic of Marii-El.

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