

# Russian Institute Downgrades Nurses to 'Cleaners' to Avoid Pay Raises

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A medical research institute has reportedly [reclassified](#) nearly 170 nurses as "cleaners" to avoid complying with Russian President Vladimir Putin's 2012 orders to raise wages.

Putin pledged to increase the real incomes of health care, education and research professionals by 2018 in executive orders known as the "May Decrees" that he signed after his inauguration in 2012.

Russian media outlets have observed employees at Russian universities, hospitals and research institutes receiving "[illogical](#)" bonuses in a rush to meet the goal months ahead of the March 2018 presidential elections.

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The Tomsk National Research Institute has downgraded 167 of its nurses to the position of

“cleaner” to avoid upping their pay to meet the May Decrees target, the Flash Siberia news website reported Wednesday, citing regional prosecutors.

“Since the workers had agreed to changes in their contract terms, having signed an additional agreement with their employer, the issue of their reinstatement is off the table,” prosecutors are quoted as saying.

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