

TV Doctor to Head Russia's Coronavirus Information Center

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Alexander Maslyakov. [Dmitry Rozhkov](#) . [Wikicommons](#)

Prominent Russian doctor and media personality Alexander Myasnikov will take charge of the national coronavirus information center, BBC Russia [reported](#) Wednesday.

Myasnikov, who frequently appears as an expert on pro-Kremlin pundit Vladimir Solovyov's program, has become known for his optimistic outlook toward the pandemic. He previously predicted that it would be "impossible" for the virus to spread to Russia.

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The doctor later [confirmed](#) that he had been appointed as the head of Russia's coronavirus information center and has already begun to work in the role.

Russia's coronavirus information center is tasked with informing citizens about the threat of the virus and sharing treatment and prevention methods. As its head, Myasnikov will also be

responsible for cracking down on “fake news” about the coronavirus outbreak in Russia.

Myasnikov is close to Moscow City Hall’s leadership, BBC Russia reported. He was previously an adviser to Mayor Sergei Sobyanin during the capital’s 2018 mayoral election as well as an adviser to President Vladimir Putin during the 2018 presidential election.

He also heads the Moscow Public Chamber’s health, demography and social policy commission.

Myasnikov claimed in February that the coronavirus could be helpful for Russians because it had encouraged people to start washing their hands and wearing face masks. He also said the Russian healthcare system was better prepared for taking on the pandemic than healthcare systems in the West.

In March, Myasnikov forecast that the coronavirus pandemic would subside by mid-April, describing it as a “seasonal phenomenon.” He later backtracked on this statement and recommended waiting for “herd immunity” to emerge.

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