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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

St. Petersburg Coronavirus Patients Filmed Lying in Hospital Hallway

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City health officials said 90% of the city's 9,000 hospital beds for Covid-19 patients were full. **Screenshot Telegram**

A video said to have been filmed inside a St. Petersburg coronavirus hospital Sunday shows patients lining the hallway in beds and on mattresses on the floor.

The footage from City Hospital No. 15 that was shared on social media paints a dire picture of the pandemic's third wave as authorities reintroduce anti-coronavirus restrictions and seek to revitalize a stalled vaccination campaign.

A patient's brother who filmed and uploaded the video said medics suggested his brother "lie on his stomach and take deep breaths" until a doctor arrives Monday, according to the St. Petersburg news website mr-7.ru.

Embed:

Health authorities in Russia's second-largest city have said at least 800 new patients have been arriving in hospitals on a daily basis since the latest surge. The city's health committee said Friday that 90% of the city's 9,000 hospital beds across 15 facilities for Covid-19 patients were occupied.

Russia's third wave is fueled by the highly infectious Delta variant first identified in India. It threatens to overwhelm hospitals as officials rush to reintroduce a host of pandemic restrictions and roll out new beds for Covid-19 patients.

In Moscow, the epicenter of Russia's outbreak with more than half of the country's new infections and two consecutive days of record-high cases on Friday and Saturday, the Delta variant accounts for nearly 90% of new cases. Authorities in the city of 12 million said they plan to expand hospital beds to 24,000 from 17,000 over the next two weeks.

Related article: Moscow Records Pandemic High for Covid Cases Second Day Running

St. Petersburg, which is hosting several Euro 2020 football matches including a July 2 quarter-final, capped attendance at two fan zones starting Sunday after banning food sales there last week. The city confirmed more than 1,000 new infections for the first time since February on Sunday.

Health authorities said they were considering making vaccinations compulsory if hospitalizations overwhelm the city's healthcare system. Ten other Russian regions including Moscow have made vaccinations mandatory for certain categories of workers.

Russia has the world's sixth-highest total coronavirus caseload at 5.3 million officially confirmed infections.

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