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## LNP'S NO-GO ON CHO

By Hayden Johnson, Thomas Chamberlin

The Courier Mail

Wednesday 13th August 2025

111 words

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### EXCLUSIVE MINISTERS STEPPED IN TO TORPEDO TOP CANDIDATE

# LNP'S NO-GO ON CHO

Queensland still waiting for a  
chief doc after hiring debacle

**Hayden Johnson  
Thomas Chamberlin**

Senior government ministers intervened to scuttle the appointment of leading doctor Krispin Hajkowicz as Queensland's next chief health officer.

The eight-month process to replace John Gerrard as the state's top doctor was restarted on Friday, despite an international recruitment campaign identifying Dr Hajkowicz (pictured) as the best candidate.

The Courier-Mail can re-

veal Dr Hajkowicz was informed he would be appointed to the \$633,000-a-year role, subject to ministerial approval. Health Minister Tim Nicholls had approved the appointment, but it is understood senior ministers intervened. **Report P10**



# Mystery block on our new top doc

By Hayden Johnson Thomas Chamberlin

The Courier Mail

Wednesday 13th August 2025

459 words

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# Mystery block on our new top doc

## CHO search begins again

**Hayden Johnson  
Thomas Chamberlin**

Senior government ministers intervened to scuttle the appointment of leading doctor Krispin Hajkowicz as Queensland's next chief health officer.

The shambolic eight-month process to replace John Gerrard as the state's top doctor was restarted on Friday – despite the first international recruitment campaign last month identifying Dr Hajkowicz as the best candidate.

The Courier-Mail can reveal Dr Hajkowicz was informed he would be appointed to the \$633,000 role subject to ministerial approval, which was considered almost a fait accompli.

Health Minister Tim Nicholls had already informally en-

dorsed Dr Hajkowicz and the 19-person cabinet was expected to rubber stamp it.

However, it is understood senior ministers in the Crisafulli government intervened to block the appointment.

It is understood Dr Hajkowicz was informed – without explanation – the job offer would be rescinded.

The state has been without a permanent chief health officer for almost 250 days amid a deadly flu season. The move has sent shockwaves through a tight group in the state's senior medical ranks, triggering calls for the decision to be reversed.

In anticipation of cabinet's approval, Queensland Health took photos of Dr Hajkowicz and prepared a communications strategy. He did not re-

spond to a request for comment.

Who within Premier David Crisafulli's cabinet intervened to thwart the appointment is

not yet clear. Mr Crisafulli and Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie did not respond to a question asking if they had argued against Dr Hajkowicz's appointment. Mr Bleijie said Mr Nicholls was working on finding a new CHO.

"The health minister, I'm sure, will be going through a recruitment process to appoint a new CHO but there's acting arrangements in place, as is the case always," he said.

Detailed questions to Mr Nicholls's office about Dr Hajkowicz's failed appointment went unanswered.

Queensland Health also declined to reveal why no appointment had been made after the initial recruitment process. A spokeswoman confirmed a campaign to recruit a chief health officer had been undertaken but "no appointment was made".

Advertising for a new CHO restarted on Friday following questions from The Courier-Mail about the whereabouts of acting CHO Heidi Carroll.

It is Dr Hajkowicz's second attempt at the CHO role.

In 2021 he was announced by Annastacia Palaszczuk as Jeannette Young's replacement, but withdrew just 28 days later and four days before he was due to start.

Dr Hajkowicz revealed he would no longer take the role due to, the government said, "personal reasons".

In November 2021 Dr Gerrard was named chief health officer, a role he would serve in for three years. In November last year Dr Gerrard revealed he would not seek a contract extension and would instead return to full-time clinical duties.

# CHO recruitment falls ill amid LNP fights

By Chris Burns

The Courier Mail

Thursday 14th August 2025

246 words

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## CHO recruitment falls ill amid LNP fights

**Chris Burns**

Recruitment of Queensland's next chief health officer has been "tainted" by the 11th hour withdrawal of leading doctor Krispin Hajkowicz's candidacy, the Opposition health spokesman says.

Dr Hajkowicz was informed he would be appointed to the \$633,000-a-year role with the backing of Health Minister Tim Nicholls.

But it is understood his candidacy was withdrawn after several cabinet ministers undermined Mr Nicholls.

Opposition Health Minister

Mark Bailey said the process had been merit-based and that Dr Hajkowicz was suited to give "fearless and frank" health advice to the government.

He drew a correlation between the burden on Queensland Health services as a result of high flu numbers, and the

lack of leadership caused from an eight-month recruitment process to fulfil the chief health officer position.

"This role has been advertised internationally, a merit-based process, and now that process has been tainted by the successful applicant being scotched by the Premier," Mr

Bailey said. "There's also a source of concern that the Premier and the Health Minister clearly can't work together."

Cabinet minister Tim Mander, while visiting Townsville, denied knowing why ministers rejected Dr Hajkowicz's role.

"I literally have no knowledge of that process," Mr Mander said. "They (Queensland Health) want to make sure they get the right person, it's a very, very important job ... I'm just waiting myself as are other ministers with regards to what recommendations will come from the Health Department."



Wednesday's front page.

# Doc blocked himself

By Hayden Johnson Thomas Chamberlin

The Courier Mail

Friday 15th August 2025

375 words

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# Doc blocked himself

Hayden Johnson  
Thomas Chamberlin

## Ministers deflect their role in last-minute backflip over CHO

Senior ministers used Krispin Hajkowicz's 2021 resignation as the incoming chief health officer to torpedo his latest bid for the top job.

A spokeswoman for Premier David Crisafulli sensationally revealed on Thursday it was the leading doctor's 2021 withdrawal that raised concerns in the government over moves to appoint him again.

"On October 5, 2021, Dr Hajkowicz was announced as the state's chief health officer – he resigned from the role three weeks later," the spokeswoman said. "This is a very forward-facing leadership role.

"The government is not confident that the stability and longevity Queenslanders expect in this role has yet been met, and the recruitment process is ongoing."

An international recruitment campaign identified Dr

Hajkowicz as the best candidate for the vacant CHO role, but senior ministers in July overruled this advice.

He was first named CHO by then premier Anastacia Palaszczuk in 2021, before withdrawing just days before starting due to "personal reasons".

The Courier-Mail understands Dr Hajkowicz has sought advice after the job offer was rescinded last month.

So advanced were the latest plans for the CHO announcement, he had been invited to have government photographs taken of him.

Health Minister Tim Nicholls last month endorsed Dr Hajkowicz's appointment before it was scuttled by senior government ministers. Who intervened is not known.

The Opposition has questioned whether Dr Hajkowicz or his family's political beliefs played a role in the decision.

Queensland's anti-discrimination laws prohibit a job appli-

cant being discriminated against for their political beliefs.

The act contains an exemption under "genuine occupational requirements" such as membership of a political party as a criterion for a position as a political adviser or staffer to a member of parliament.

However, the hiring of Queensland CHO is highly regarded

as an independent, non-political appointment.

Deputy Opposition Leader Cameron Dick said questions remained why an eminently qualified medical specialist was "robbed" of the CHO job.

Mr Dick said Labor was considering whether to refer the matter to an independent agency – likely the Crime and Corruption Commission.

Government minister Tim Mander said he had "no knowledge" about the revoked appointment of Dr Hajkowicz before reading it in this newspaper.



# LNP takes hypocritic oath

By Hayden Johnson Thomas Chamberlin

The Courier Mail

Saturday 16th August 2025

414 words

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# LNP takes hypocritic oath

Hayden Johnson  
Thomas Chamberlin

## Questions over why the rules cited to block state's top doc did not apply to Treasurer

Krispin Hajkowicz is understood to be seeking legal advice about the intervention of senior ministers to withdraw an offer for him become chief health officer.

Dr Hajkowicz – who declined to comment when approached by The Courier-Mail – is thought to be considering legal options after ministers in July overruled an independent selection panel than recommended he be appointed chief health officer.

The significant development comes as the government faces claims of hypocrisy for using Dr Hajkowicz's decision four years ago to resign as incoming chief health officer as justification to withdraw the job offer in July.

A spokeswoman for Premier David Crisafulli on Thursday said the government was not satisfied Dr Hajkowicz would

bring stability to the “forward-facing leadership role” because he withdrew from the job in 2021 due to personal reasons.

AMA Queensland President Nick Yim said the state's top doctor should be a non-political appointment.

“The role of the chief health officer is essential and it's important that appointments are made with transparency and in the best interests of Queenslanders' health,” he said. “The CHO must remain a trusted, nonpartisan voice, providing clear, consistent public health guidance so the community can stay informed and safe.”

Deputy Opposition Leader Cameron Dick argued the reasoning was a “nonsense excuse” and said the government was attempting to cover up the appointment backflip.

“We know the Deputy Premier (Jarrod Bleijie) is absolutely involved in this,” Mr Dick said.

“I don't think it's about public health. I think it's about

politics.”

Mr Bleijie's office did not answer questions about whether he intervened to scuttle Dr Hajkowicz's appointment.

Mr Dick noted Mr Janetzki, now Treasurer and Energy Minister, stepped down as the LNP's deputy opposition leader in February 2022 due to personal reasons.

“That was the right thing to do for him and a few years later, when he was in a position to do so, David Janetzki returned to a very forward-facing role as Queensland's Treasurer and Energy Minister. What I don't think passes the pub test is why an eminently qualified specialist does not have the same rules applied to him.”

Dr Hajkowicz was first appointed CHO by Annastacia Palaszczuk in October 2021 to replace Jeannette Young.

Dr Young at the time revealed she had relief on Dr Hajkowicz's advice during the outbreak and response to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Hajkowicz

# Premier dodges doc veto scandal

By Leighton Smith, Brendan O'Malley

The Sunday Mail

Sunday 17th August 2025

311 words

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## Premier dodges doc veto scandal

Leighton Smith  
Brendan O'Malley

Premier David Crisafulli has spoken for the first time on the controversy surrounding the appointment of a new Chief Health Officer.

But Mr Crisafulli dodged questions about whether he, or his deputy Jarrod Bleijie, had stepped in to block Dr Krispin Hajkowicz from being appointed.

Mr Crisafulli also did not reveal whether

he had spoken to the doctor but said he chose not to politicise the matter four years ago when he was Opposition Leader.

"The doctor had the job (four years ago) and then walked away from it," he said.

"We believe in a forward-facing role. It is important there is stability in that role.

"It's important there's a stability there – that there's a longevity there.

"I didn't make comment four years ago when the decision was taken for him not to accept that role.

"I respected his privacy then and I want to respect it now.

"I'm not the one talking about it, I'm only commenting on this because I'm being asked about it and the Labor Party is commenting on it every day."

It comes after The Sunday Mail revealed Dr Hajkowicz was understood to be seeking legal advice about the intervention of senior ministers to withdraw an offer for him to become chief health officer.

Dr Hajkowicz – who declined to comment when approached by The Sunday Mail – is thought to be considering his legal options after ministers in July overruled an independent selection panel that recommended he be appointed chief health officer.

The significant development comes as the state government faces claims of hypocrisy for using Dr Hajkowicz's decision four years ago to resign as incoming chief health officer as justification to withdraw the job offer in July.

Previously, AMA Queensland president Nick Yim said the state's top doctor should be a non-political appointment.



# Premier speaks out on CHO controversy

By Leighton Smith, Brendan O'Malley

The Chronicle

Monday 18th August 2025

285 words

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## Premier speaks out on CHO controversy

**Leighton Smith,  
Brendan O'Malley**

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