

Gluten Free Prescribing for Patients Diagnosed with Coeliac Disease

Commissioning decision	Gluten free prescribing is no longer available in Gloucestershire and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Funding approval must be sought from Gloucestershire ICB via the Individual Funding Request process prior to treatment.
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Policy Statement:

Requests for gluten free prescribing may be considered where:

- There are exceptional circumstances
AND
- All other advice and support have failed, including advice around where gluten free products can be sourced for a reasonable price e.g., supermarkets, advice around food sources that are naturally gluten free and advice around Coeliac UK membership/resources (the national coeliac disease charity).
- **Meeting the above criteria does not guarantee funding approval.**

Note: Financial reasons alone are not considered exceptional.

Note: Even in exceptional circumstances only gluten free bread and gluten free bread mix should be issued on prescription. Items like cakes, biscuits, pizza bases etc are considered luxury items that the patient should be expected to purchase themselves.

Rationale:

- Since **30 November 2016**, gluten-free products have not been available on NHS prescription in Gloucestershire.
- NHS Gloucestershire continues to advise patients affected to follow a gluten-free diet. Many foods are naturally free from gluten such as rice, potatoes, corn, meat (unprocessed), fish, fruit and vegetables.
- Gluten-free alternative products, such as breads and pasta, are now widely available to buy, with improved choice and quality.
- The total cost to the NHS of gluten-free pasta or bread on prescription is much more expensive than the price of a similar gluten-free product in local shops due to prescription logistics and supply issues.
- Any prescriptions made in exceptional circumstances should be restricted to bread loaves and flour/bread mixes only. NHS Gloucestershire will continue to monitor adherence to this.
- The prescribing of any other gluten-free items such as bread rolls, baguettes, pizza bases, wraps, cakes, biscuits, crackers and breakfast cereals is not approved by NHS Gloucestershire.
- Access to shops is rarely an issue as patients will be visiting shops (or having deliveries) for other shopping, where either gluten-free products or foods naturally free in gluten will be available to buy. The [Coeliac UK website provides information](#) to help patients with this.

Policy Category:

INNF

Who usually applies for funding?

GP

Plain English Summary:

Since 2016 gluten free products have not been available on prescription in Gloucestershire.

If your doctor believes that you have exceptional circumstances that could be improved through prescribing gluten free products then the Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board may consider supporting an application, however any requests for gluten free prescribing will be considered on a case-by-case basis and you will need to demonstrate why your case is exceptional.

Even in exceptional circumstances only gluten free bread and bread mixes will be available on prescription.

Evidence base:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coeliac-disease/>

<https://www.coeliac.org.uk/information-and-support/coeliac-disease/about-coeliac-disease/>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs134>

For further information please contact GLICB.IFR@nhs.net

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Policy sign off:

Reviewing Body	Date of review
Effective Clinical Commissioning Policy Group	22.09.2022
Integrated Governance and Quality Committee	-

Version Control

Version No	Type of Change	Date	Description of Change