

From the office of: Dr Nil Sanganee
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Based At: County Hall, Leicester

Dear Pharmacy colleague,

Re: Public consultation on the proposal to stop providing NHS prescriptions for gluten-free products.

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB will be undertaking a six-week public consultation, commencing 3rd June 2024, on a proposal to stop providing prescriptions for gluten-free products.

As you will be aware, we currently prescribe a maximum of up to eight units of bread or flour per month to patients diagnosed with coeliac disease and dermatitis herpetiformis. Prescriptions for gluten-free products are taken up by approximately 1,300 people across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Since our last review of gluten-free prescriptions in 2016-17, a number of ICBs have completely stopped prescribing gluten-free products, including our neighbouring ICBs (Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Derbyshire). Within the Midlands region, LLR and Lincolnshire are outliers in continuing to prescribe gluten-free products.

We believe that we should stop prescribing gluten-free products for the following reasons:

- Gluten-free foods have become more accessible in some supermarkets and online. Food is also better labelled, so it is easier to see if foods are free from gluten and safe to be eaten by someone with a sensitivity.
- It is possible to eat a gluten-free diet that follows the Eat Well Guide (<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/>) for balanced eating without the need for any specialist dietary foods. People can choose naturally gluten-free carbohydrate containing food, such as rice and potatoes, as part of a healthy balanced diet.
- Whilst we recognise that gluten-free food is often more expensive than equivalent products containing gluten, prices have reduced over time. Unfortunately, the price paid by the NHS for gluten-free foods on prescription is much higher than the supermarket or online prices.

We are very keen to understand the impact of our proposed change on patients and their families before any decisions are made.

Chief Executive: Andy Williams | **Chair:** David Sissling

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We are requesting our Pharmacy colleagues support us to make patients and their families aware of the public consultation and encourage them to participate.

To find out more about the public consultation we are hosting a half hour webinar on **29 May 2024 at 14.00**. Please arrange for a member of staff to attend if you are unable to join yourself. Here is the teams link to join: [Join the meeting now](#)

Half an hour webinar on public consultation on gluten free details:

When: Wednesday 29th May 2024

Time: 2.00pm – 2.30pm

How: [Join the meeting now](#)

Further information will be sent out next week.

If you have any further questions, please contact us on llricb-llr.beinvolved@nhs.net or 0116 295 7532.

Many thanks for your support.

Yours sincerely



Dr Nil Sanganee
Chief Medical Officer