

1 November 2023

Changes to the commissioning policy for gluten-free prescribing

Dear patient

We are writing to you on behalf of the NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) because you are currently prescribed gluten-free products.

At its meeting on 31 October 2023, the ICB Transformation Committee approved a proposal to stop gluten-free prescribing in Calderdale and Leeds. This brings them in line with the other West Yorkshire places (Bradford District and Craven, Kirklees and Wakefield District), where gluten-free prescribing was stopped in 2016-17. This does not apply to patients who require low protein gluten-free foods due to [phenylketonuria \(PKU\)](#) for example. The [new commissioning statement for gluten-free prescribing is available to view here](#).

In making this decision, the committee considered feedback from patients and the general public which was gathered earlier this year. If you took part in this involvement, thank you for taking the time to share your views and get involved. Please see our web page [Your views on treatments paid for by the NHS](#) for more information about the involvement.

What happens next?

All gluten-free prescriptions (except for those patients who need low protein gluten-free foods) will be stopped from 1 April 2024. Gluten-free prescriptions will not be available for those newly diagnosed with coeliac disease from 1 November 2023.

A wide range of gluten-free products are now readily available in supermarkets, other shops and online. However, the main theme from the patient and public feedback was the cost of these products compared to cheaper, gluten-containing alternatives. Many low-cost foods, including potatoes and rice, are naturally gluten-free so it is possible to follow a gluten-free diet without prescription products.

How will I be supported?

The ICB is developing patient information to support people through the transition period. There is already a lot of dietary advice online that you may find helpful, including [Coeliac UK's Food and Drink Information](#) which gives product suitability for nearly 150,000 gluten-free and mainstream foods.

Further information

Demand for NHS services continues to increase and the ICB needs to make sure that funding is used appropriately and fairly across West Yorkshire.

There may be exceptional clinical circumstances where a GP or other healthcare professional believes a patient should have a treatment or a procedure that is no longer routinely available. If your healthcare professional believes that your circumstances are clinically exceptional, and that you should still receive gluten-free products on prescription, they can ask the NHS to pay the costs. To do this, your healthcare professional would need to complete an [individual funding request](#) on your behalf.

There are some frequently asked questions on this web page [Treatments paid for by the NHS](#) which may be helpful. If you would like to ask a question, or make a comment or complaint about this decision, please email the ICB Governance Team at: westyorkshireics.governance@nhs.net or call: 01924 213050 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm).