

## **PRESCRIBING COMMISSIONING POLICY: GLUTEN FREE FOOD**

**NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group  
will only fund the prescribing of the following  
Gluten Free (GF) Food:**

**Bread loaves\*, bread mix, flour, flour mix,  
crackers and pasta.**

\*This does not include any form of bread roll (e.g. hot dog roll, hamburger roll).

Individual cases will be reviewed at the NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group Individual Funding Request Panel upon receipt of a completed application form from the patient's GP, Consultant or Clinician.

Applications cannot be considered from patients personally.

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# Gluten-Free (GF) Products Prescribing Policy

<b>Version</b>	1.0
<b>Ratified By</b>	Quality and Performance Committee
<b>Date Ratified</b>	29.11.16
<b>Author</b>	Mandeep Virdee Medicines Management Team Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit
<b>Local Changes</b>	
<b>Issue Date</b>	December 2016
<b>Review Date</b>	December 2018
<b>Intended Audience</b>	Wirral GP practices and other local providers linked to the Clinical Commissioning Group prescribing budget

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# POLICY FOR PRESCRIBING OF GLUTEN FREE (GF) PRODUCTS

## 1. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the decision taken by NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group to further restrict prescribing of GF food and to support prescribers to implement this decision.
- 1.2 This policy will ensure equity of service for all residents of Wirral and will allow the same expectation of what will be provided from the GP Practice or other services.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all services contracted by or delivered by the NHS across Wirral CCG including:
  - a) GP Practices – GPs and any other Prescribers
  - b) Out of hours and extended hours providers
  - c) Acute Hospitals
  - d) Out-Patient Clinics
  - e) NHS Community Providers
  - f) Independent providers
  - g) Community pharmacies
- 1.4 This policy applies to all people (adults and children) who are registered with a GP in the Wirral (permanent or temporary resident) or who access a NHS service in Wirral.
- 1.5 The quantities of GF foods recommended by Wirral CCG have been adapted from those outlined by Coeliac UK (appendix 1 and 2) to reflect limitations placed on prescribing (as outlined in this document).

## 1. GLUTEN FREE FOOD PRESCRIBING

- 1.1 NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group will further restrict the prescribing of GF foods, as a result, only the following foods can be prescribed:

Bread loaves (does not include any form of bread roll, e.g. hot dog roll, hamburger roll), bread mix, flour, flour mix, crackers and pasta.

Fresh bread may be prescribed, providing the pharmacy orders it from a wholesaler that does not apply handling charges.

Prescribing of the basic food groups is limited to the cost-effective brands. Recommended quantities should not be exceeded (appendix 1). The diet should be supplemented with carbohydrates that are naturally gluten free.

## Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group

- 1.2 The current arrangement for patients to be supported with advice from the WUTH Dietetics team will continue.
- 1.3 Patients will be expected to purchase GF foods if required. Patients should be signposted to appropriate sources of information on maintaining a healthy gluten-free diet.

## **2. MONITORING PRESCRIBING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: GF FOOD PRESCRIBING REVIEW**

- 2.1 NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group has a duty to ensure that the local NHS budget is spent in an appropriate way.
- 2.2 The Quality, Performance & Finance Group is responsible for ensuring that all agreed actions are carried out by healthcare professionals according to this policy.
- 2.3 Implementation of the policy will be monitored via ePACT data and recorded within the CCG Financial Recovery Plan.

## Appendix 1 – Quantities of GF foods recommended by Wirral CCG

Men		Women		Children	
Age (years)	Monthly (units)	Age (years)	Monthly (units)	Age (years)	Monthly (units)
19-59	9	19-74	7	1-3	8
60-74	8	75+	6	4-6	9
75+	7	Breastfeeding	9	7-10	10
		Pregnancy 3rd trimester	8	11-18	12

### Notes:

Quantities are **suggested** only and may be decreased where appropriate. Refer to the dietician service if necessary.

Each prescription should be for one month's supply of food.

Information obtained from Coeliac UK. For more information, visit

[www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk)

## Appendix 2 – Unit values of GF foods

Prescribable Food	Unit value
400g bread loaves	1
500g flour, bread mix or flour mix	2
200g crackers	1
250g pasta	1

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**Appendix 3 – Sample patient letter**

**Letter which could be utilised by GP Practices to all registered patients affected by the decision**



**Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group**

**Date:**

NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group  
Old Market House  
Hamilton Street  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
CH41 5AL

Tel: 0151 651 0011

**REF: Changes to your gluten free food prescription**

Dear Sir / Madam

NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), previously known as the Primary Care Trust, is the organisation responsible for planning, monitoring and commissioning the majority of local health services for the Wirral population.

As you will be aware from the media, and perhaps from your own experiences, our local health economy is facing significant challenges in dealing with increasing demand across all aspects of healthcare service delivery, including prescription medications.

These demands have financial implications, requiring us to look collectively across the system at how we make most efficient use of resources in ways which do not impact patient care.

One of the areas identified by Wirral CCG is the prescription of gluten free products.

These products – which include flour, bread, pasta, biscuits and pizza base mix – were originally added as products available on prescription at a time when they were not readily available for purchase in local supermarkets

In recent years the variety and accessibility of gluten free products has improved considerably with many products now available at prices which are significantly lower than the prescription cost to the NHS.

## Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group

In order to address this issue, during the summer of 2016, we undertook a formal consultation process seeking views from the Wirral public regarding the prescription of gluten free products.

The result of this consultation was discussed and debated (in public) at the Wirral CCG Governing Body of 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

The decision reached at that Governing Body meeting was to further restrict the prescription of gluten free products. The table below details the number of units now available on prescription. The following foods can be prescribed: bread loaves (does not include any form of bread roll, e.g. hot dog roll, hamburger roll), bread mix, flour, flour mix, crackers and pasta.

Men		Women		Children	
Age (years)	Monthly (units)	Age (years)	Monthly (units)	Age (years)	Monthly (units)
19-59	9	19-74	7	1-3	8
60-74	8	75+	6	4-6	9
75+	7	Breastfeeding	9	7-10	10
		Pregnancy 3rd trimester	8	11-18	12

The full consultation report including a question and answer document further explaining our decision is available on our website:

<https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/Patient-Engagement/prescribing-policy-information-for-patients.htm>.

If you do not have access to the internet you can request a copy of the documentation by calling 0151 651 0011.

Yours faithfully,

**Dr Paula Cowan**  
**Medical Director**  
**Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group**



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**Appendix 4 - References**

- Prescribing for clinical need and gluten-free foods policy. Heywood Middleton and Rochdale Clinical Commissioning Group.
- Coeliac UK, Gluten-free foods: A revised prescribing guideline 2011, Nov 2011, updated 2012. Available at [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk)

**Acknowledgements:**

- MLCSU Medicines Management and Optimisation Team – West Cheshire CCG
- Medicines Management Team, Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Clinical Commissioning Group.
- Medicines Management Team, North Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group.