

## **Join in the conversation about gluten free prescribing**

The views of patients, carers and the wider public are being sought about the availability of gluten free foods on prescription.

NHS Bury Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is starting a conversation with patients, carers and the wider public about the appropriateness of NHS prescriptions for gluten free foods for adults.

The 8 week engagement phase which launches on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015, will inform a future decision by the CCG as to whether it should continue to prescribe in this area. There are a number of ways people can have their say.

Earlier in the year, Clinicians on the CCG's Governing Body, agreed a policy to ensure that prescribing money is spent in the most appropriate areas. As part of this discussion, the availability of gluten free foods on NHS prescription was considered.

CCG Clinicians recognised that the NHS does not provide foods on prescription for patients living with other conditions associated with or affected by the type of food they eat. It also recognised that many gluten free food alternatives are now widely available in supermarkets and health food shops.

Following engagement with the CCG's Patient Cabinet, it was agreed, in line with a number of areas across the country, to reduce the maximum number of units adults can obtain on an NHS prescription to 8 units per month from September this year (with additional units for pregnant and breast feeding women), with a view to exploring a phasing out of prescribing gluten free foods for adults from next year.

Dr. Kiran Patel, Chair and Clinical Lead for NHS Bury Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) said: "The Governing Body of the CCG felt minded to explore whether, in the future, gluten free foods should be prescribed for adults. We understand that a decision to stop prescribing gluten free foods for adults will impact on individuals in different ways, and, as a responsible commissioner, it is important that we fully consider the views of patients, carers, the wider public, together with our clinicians, so that we are fully aware of the likely impact of the proposal, before making a decision. I would encourage people to get involved and tell us what they think of our proposal, so that we have a clear picture of what this means to local people."

### **People can give their views on the proposal in a number of ways:**

- An online survey is available [here](#)
- A paper copy of the survey can be obtained by calling **0161 762 3106** or by [emailing](#)
- Views can be sent in via the CCG website feedback facility; by [email](#) or by letter to NHS Bury Clinical Commissioning Group, Communications and Engagement Team (Gluten Free Prescribing), 21 Silver Street, Bury, BL9 0EN

- In addition, two focus groups have been arranged, and people with views on the proposals are encouraged to book a place, these will take place on: [10<sup>th</sup> November, 5.30 - 7pm](#) , and [18<sup>th</sup> November, 9.30 – 11am](#).

The 8 week engagement phase will come to a close on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2015. All feedback from the 8 week engagement phase will be analysed and reported back to the CCG Governing Body in the new year.

**Ends.**

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015

**FOR PRESS & MEDIA ENQUIRIES:** contact Carrie Dearden, Communications and Engagement Manager on 0161 762 3106 or email [buccg.communications@nhs.net](mailto:buccg.communications@nhs.net)

**Notes to Editor:**

Currently eligible Bury patients can obtain a range of staple foods including bread, pasta and flour on NHS prescription. In the last 12 months, NHS Bury CCG spend on gluten free foods was £79,000.