

Position Statement: Gluten Free Foods

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (ICB) supports equitable, evidence-based access to care while ensuring responsible stewardship of NHS resources.

The purpose of this position statement is to define the position of the ICB in relation to the prescribing and provision of gluten-free foods for patients with a confirmed diagnosis of a gluten sensitive enteropathy.

The position statement applies, where appropriate, to:

- Any patient who is the responsibility of Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes ICB with a confirmed diagnosis of a gluten-sensitive enteropathy (excluding Phenylketonuria (PKU)).
- All clinicians prescribing for residents within BLMK ICB.
- All ICB staff members involved in policy-making processes, whether permanent, temporary or contracted.
- All commissioned providers.

Position Statement

Gluten-free bread and flour will not be routinely prescribed for residents in BLMK ICB with a diagnosis of a gluten-sensitive enteropathy. Due to increases in the cost of living and the pressures on households there is provision in the guidance to allow residents who are at risk of dietary neglect to access gluten-free foods off-prescription, where required. For patients on no income or low income this will be via a direct access scheme through community Pharmacy. For any other residents this will be via the dietetic teams and an approval process.

Roles and Responsibilities in Relation to the Position Statement

All commissioned providers must adhere to this position statement.

Clinicians must ensure prescribing aligns with this position and refer patients appropriately to the available schemes where eligibility criteria are met.

The BLMK ICB Prescribing Committee will:

- Approve and oversee the commissioned gluten-free foods scheme.

The Medicines Optimisation Team will:

- Support implementation of this position statement.
- Monitor prescribing and scheme utilisation.

Appendix 1: Definitions

Gluten-sensitive enteropathy:

Includes Coeliac disease and Dermatitis Herpetiformis.

Appendix 2: Background Information to Support Position Statement

This position reflects the ICB's approach to balancing clinical need, patient safety, and financial sustainability.

Gluten-free foods are widely available for purchase; however, some patients may be at risk of dietary neglect due to financial hardship. This position therefore includes provision to support equitable access for those most in need.

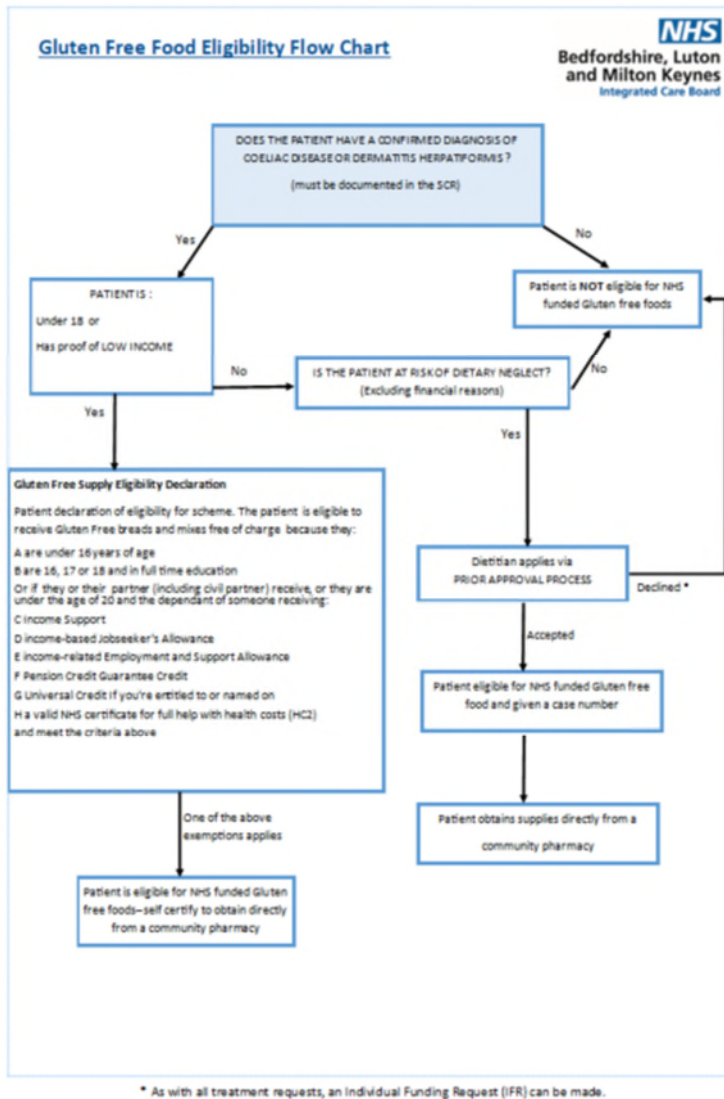
The approach aligns with the ICB's responsibility to ensure appropriate use of NHS resources while maintaining patient safety and supporting vulnerable populations.

Eligibility criteria and operational processes are supported by:

- A flow chart outlining eligibility and access routes
- A service specification describing scheme delivery
- A standardised order form to support access

These documents should be used in conjunction with this position statement.

Appendix 3 - Flow Chart on Eligibility and Summary of the Scheme



Appendix 4 – BLMK Gluten Free Service Specification



BLMK GFS Service
Specification October

Appendix 5 - Gluten Free Foods order form

Available at <https://medicines.bedfordshirelutonandmiltonkeynes.icb.nhs.uk/categories/gp-resources/gluten-free-foods>)

References

The following articles were accessed and used to inform the development of this document:

- Coeliac Society guidance (accessed at [Coeliac Disease Guidelines | BSG](#))