

Deprescribing of gluten-free foods across South Yorkshire

Frequently asked questions

1. What is the proposed change?

Previously, gluten free (GF) bread and flour mixes were provided on NHS prescription for patients within South Yorkshire. The South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB), which oversees the provision of healthcare, has changed its position and guidance to GPs on the prescribing of gluten-free foods. This means gluten-free foods will no longer be available on prescription.

2. When will the change take place?

From Dec 2025 patients will not be prescribed gluten free food products by default. For patients already receiving prescriptions, GP's will commence work to deprescribe these items.

3. Who will be affected by the change?

This change will affect those patients currently being prescribed GF bread and flour mixes.

4. Why has this change been implemented?

The NHS in South Yorkshire has a duty to live within their financial allocation and to break even (balance the books) each year. In addition, they have a duty to secure the best investment for the funds that have been allocated to provide high quality care for local people.

Within this context, the ICB started reviewing some services and policies, with the aim of focusing resources on the services that matter to South Yorkshire's communities the most. All areas of commissioning are being explored in relation to organisational priorities, the priorities of South Yorkshire's citizens, cost effectiveness, clinical outcomes and essential services. One of the areas that was identified to review was the current arrangements for the prescribing of gluten-free products provided on the NHS in South Yorkshire.

The review set out to re-consider the level of gluten free prescribing funded by the NHS in South Yorkshire, with a view to understanding the implications of potentially reducing the eligibility for gluten free bread and mixes on prescription.

The ICB Citizen Involvement Team were tasked with ensuring that the voices of patients and citizens was a key part of the review.

5. How was the decision made to stop prescribing gluten-free foods?

On July 28, 2025, the South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) initiated a 12-week public engagement initiative to gather feedback from local residents regarding the future of NHS gluten-free food prescriptions. The consultation concluded on October 17, 2025. On December 3, 2025, the NHS South Yorkshire Board made the difficult decision to

decommission gluten free bread and mixes prescribing (except for the most at risk of clinical harm by not adhering to a gluten free diet).

6. Will gluten-free foods continue to be prescribed to patients with other conditions?

Gluten free products will not be routinely prescribed in South Yorkshire for any condition unless exceptional circumstances apply.

7. What support will be offered to those who will no longer receive gluten-free foods on prescription?

- We will continue to support, advise and provide routine clinical monitoring of patients diagnosed with coeliac disease, dermatitis herpetiformis or gluten ataxia through our GP practices, community dietetics services and gastroenterology departments.
- Patients are encouraged to maintain a healthy, balanced gluten free diet to ensure adequate intake of vitamins and minerals. Further advice and support with maintaining a gluten-free diet can be found on the Coeliac UK website ([link](#)).

8. Is the ICB following national guidance?

This update brings South Yorkshire ICB into line with other ICB's across the country that have taken this decision.

In 2018 NHS England issued guidance on prescribing gluten-free foods in primary care. This guidance left the decision to prescribe gluten-free bread or flour mixes, or choose to end prescribing of these altogether with individual local commissioners (now ICBs).

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) advises that individuals diagnosed with coeliac disease should receive an annual review, and we will continue in monitoring patients according to these guidelines. The guidelines are accessible at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng20/chapter/Recommendations#advice-on-dietary-management>

9. How will I manage my condition if I can no longer obtain gluten-free bread or flour mixes on prescription?

Gluten free foods are widely available and can be purchased from a variety of retail outlets. Patients are encouraged to eat a healthy, well-balanced diet through the consumption of naturally gluten-free foods such as meat, fish, fruit and vegetables and including starchy staples such as potatoes, rice, buckwheat, corn, maize, polenta, millet, quinoa, sago, sweet potato, tapioca and yams. Further information can be found on the Coeliac UK website ([link](#)). Mobile phone apps are also available to aid patients where available.

10. What should I do if I struggle to maintain a gluten-free diet without the prescribed bread or flour mixes?

If you are struggling to maintain a gluten-free diet, please seek advice from your community pharmacy, dietician, GP or other health care professional.

11. Will I continue to receive gluten-free bread or flour mixes on prescription if I am on a low income?

The recommendation to stop prescribing gluten-free products applies to everyone with coeliac disease, dermatitis herpetiformis or gluten ataxia. Affordability or financial hardship is not considered an exceptional circumstance.

12. Will children continue to receive gluten-free bread or flour mixes on prescription?

The recommendation to stop prescribing gluten-free products applies to everyone with coeliac disease, dermatitis herpetiformis or gluten ataxia.

13. Are there any exceptions?

Exceptionality exists for those patients most at risk of clinical harm by not adhering to a gluten free diet. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Patients diagnosed with refractory coeliac disease (RCD)
- Patients lacking capacity (e.g. dementia or learning disabilities) to aid in managing adherence of a gluten-free diet

Affordability or financial hardship is not considered an exceptional circumstance.

14. Where can I access further support for my coeliac condition?

- Coeliac UK, offers information and support and contains useful recipes and tips for managing a gluten-free diet <https://www.coeliac.org.uk/>
- Young Barnsley Coeliac Group
https://www.instagram.com/ybc_group?igsh=cDd3YTI0Mm0wMHVw
- [SY ICB](#)
- Advice around cost of living:
 - Social prescribing: [https://syics.co.uk/health_inequalities/social-prescribing#:~:text=Other%20forms%20of%20support%20we,services%20\(e.g.%20debt%20advice\).](https://syics.co.uk/health_inequalities/social-prescribing#:~:text=Other%20forms%20of%20support%20we,services%20(e.g.%20debt%20advice).)
 - Help with household costs: <https://www.southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/help-with-household-costs>
 - Local Council Support with Cost of Living: [Barnsley](#), [Rotherham](#), [Sheffield](#), [Doncaster](#)
 - Citizens Advice: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

15. If you would like to contact the ICB

- Website: <https://southyorkshire.icb.nhs.uk/contact-us>
- Telephone: 0333 041 0021
- Complaints: syicb-sheffield.icbcomplaints@nhs.net