

Prescribing of Gluten Free Food Policy

Greater Preston CCG and Chorley and South Ribble CCG do not fund the prescribing of Gluten Free (GF) Food.

• Summary

In developing local commissioning policies, the CCG will commission only treatments or services which accord with all of the following principles:

- Appropriateness
- Effectiveness
- Cost-effectiveness
- Ethics
- Affordability

Greater Preston and Chorley and South Ribble **CCGs** currently spend approximately **£195,773** annually on the prescribing of gluten free (GF) food. Patients with gluten-sensitive enteropathy, including coeliac disease, should follow a strict GF diet.

Prescribing costs of GF food are expected to increase annually as increasing numbers of patients are diagnosed with gluten-sensitive enteropathy. There is also pressure on clinicians to prescribe GF foods for patients with other conditions that are not covered by NHS exemptions.

GF food is expensive when obtained via NHS prescription, and is considerably more costly than the price of purchasing GF food. GF foods are available in supermarkets with a wide variety of choice. In some supermarkets GF staple foods e.g. bread and flour are more expensive than equivalent gluten containing items. However, many coeliac patients can alter their diet to replace bread with naturally gluten-free foods e.g. rice, potato.

• Policy Rationale

Greater Preston and Chorley and South Ribble **CCGs** advise that GF will not be prescribed on NHS prescriptions. This policy will ensure equity of service for all residents of Greater Preston and Chorley and South Ribble **CCGs** and will allow the same expectation of what will be provided from the GP Practice or other services. This policy applies to all services contracted by or delivered by the NHS across Greater Preston and Chorley and South Ribble CCGs.

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.