

February 2026

Dear patient

Important change to your NHS gluten-free bread/flour

We are writing about a change to how you get your NHS gluten-free bread/flour.

What is changing?

From 1 April 2026, people aged 24 and under will need to contact their GP to get an NHS prescription for gluten-free bread/flour mix.

You will no longer be able to order gluten-free bread/flour mix at your local pharmacy.

When you are 25 years old, you will no longer get NHS gluten-free bread/flour mix.

Why is this happening?

The NHS has limited money. We need to use it wisely to help as many people as possible. This means we have to make choices about what we can and can't pay for. We made this choice after doing a review of these prescriptions across the North East and North Cumbria.

Gluten-free foods are now:

- Easy to find in shops and online
- Clearly labelled
- Cheaper to buy in shops than through NHS prescriptions

What does this mean for you?

- You will need to ask your GP for a prescription for gluten-free bread/flour mix
- You should keep to a gluten-free diet
- When you are aged 25, you will no longer get NHS gluten-free bread/flour mix

What is not changing?

- You can still speak to your healthcare team for advice
- You will continue to receive medical care and support for coeliac disease
- Prescriptions for other medicines are not affected

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Yours sincerely

Dr Neil O'Brien

Chief Medical Officer,
NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board