

# Communications toolkit for GP practices – Proposed change to NHS prescriptions for gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mix

(Final: 15 July 2025)

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## About this toolkit

This toolkit is for GP practices across the North East and North Cumbria to encourage patients who currently receive an NHS prescription for gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mix, and for people who have coeliac disease and other gluten-related disorders, to take part in a survey.

This toolkit includes information and resources to use across your communication channels to help raise awareness with patients and to get them involved in the survey. The online resources can be found [here](#).

Your support in helping us to share these messages is appreciated.

For further help or advice on using this toolkit please contact:  
[nencicb.comms@nhs.net](mailto:nencicb.comms@nhs.net)

## Background

Currently, in the region, the only gluten-free products available on NHS prescription are bread, rolls and flour mixes. The North East and North Cumbria ICB is proposing to end the routine prescribing of gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mixes.

In the North East and North Cumbria, approximately 4,700 patients are prescribed gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mix, with approximately 34,000 items issued annually.

There is a disparity in gluten-free prescribing across the region with some areas prescribing significantly more items than others.

Things have changed since this gluten-free support was introduced:

- Gluten-free foods are easier to buy in shops and online.
- Food labels are clearer, so people can more easily choose the right products to have a healthy diet.
- However, these foods still cost more than normal food.

- The NHS pays significantly more for these gluten-free items than the retail price.

The proposal to stop prescriptions for gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mix aims to help align our region with national gluten-free product prescribing policy, reduce inequity, and ensure NHS funds are used as fairly and effectively as possible. Many other areas in England have already stopped gluten-free prescribing of these products for these reasons.

## What's happening now?

No final decision has been made. The NHS in the North East and North Cumbria is asking for public views on a proposal to stop prescribing gluten-free bread, rolls, and flour mixes. A six-week involvement period runs from 15 July to 25 August 2025, to help inform any future decisions. The NHS is listening to people's views through a range of activities:

- An online survey for patients, carers, and the wider public
- Focus groups, particularly for those who may be more affected
- Direct communication through GP practices and pharmacies
- Partnership working with voluntary and community sector organisations
- An Equality Impact Assessment to help identify and reduce any unintended impact on different groups

## How you can support?

Please use this toolkit to help raise awareness with patients who receive prescriptions of gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mixes to take part in the survey and give their views.

**The survey opens on 15 July and runs for 6 weeks until 25 August 2025.**

## Toolkit contents

This communications toolkit contains useful resources to help promote and encourage your patients to take part in this survey. It includes:

- **Draft letter** to be sent to patients who receive a prescription for gluten-free bread, rolls or flour mixes
- SMS text message
- Website copy
- Social media posts
- Printable poster
- TV screen file

## Draft letter to patients from GP practice

[GP Practice Name]

[Practice Address]

[Date]

Dear [Patient Name],

### **Tell us what you think: proposed changes to gluten-free prescriptions**

We are writing to you because you currently get gluten-free bread, rolls, or flour mix on prescription.

The NHS in the North East and North Cumbria is thinking about changing this. It is looking at stopping prescriptions for these items.

No decision has been made yet. Before anything changes, we want to know what you think.

### **Why is this being looked at?**

- Gluten-free foods are now easier to find in shops and online.
- Food labels are clearer, so people can make choices more easily.
- Gluten-free foods often cost more than other foods.
- The NHS pays a lot more for gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mix on prescription than they cost in the shops.
- The NHS has a limited budget and needs to spend it in the most effective way across the region.

This proposal would help the NHS be fairer across the region and follow national guidance.

### **How to have your say**

You can fill in a short survey to share your views.

- It takes around 5 to 10 minutes.
- You don't need to give your name.
- Your answers will help the NHS make a fair decision.

To take part, please visit the North East and North Cumbria ICB website:

[northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/get-involved/share-your-views-on-health-and-care-projects](https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/get-involved/share-your-views-on-health-and-care-projects), or use the following QR code:



The survey is open until **Monday 25 August 2025**.

If you would like a paper copy or need help to fill it in, please contact the NHS involvement team:

**Email:** NENCICB.Involve@nhs.net

**Phone:** 0191 512 8484 and ask for the involvement

Thank you for reading this letter. We hope you will share your views.

**Yours sincerely,**

**[GP Name or Practice Team]**

**[Practice Name]**

### **SMS text message**

NHS survey: Do you get gluten-free bread, rolls or flour mix on prescription? Have your say on possible changes. Complete the short survey by 25 Aug:

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/nencicb/nenc-gluten-free-2025>

### **Website copy:**

#### **Have your say on proposed changes to gluten-free prescriptions**

The only gluten-free products you can get on NHS prescription are bread, rolls and flour mixes. Your local NHS is thinking about stopping this.

If you or someone you care for receives these items on prescription, the NHS want to hear what you think.

No decision has been made yet - your views will help the NHS decide what to do next.

Please take part in the short survey (5 –10 minutes):

Link to survey <https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/nencicb/nenc-gluten-free-2025>

The survey is open until **25 August 2025**.

If you need help or require a paper copy of the survey, please email NENCICB.Involve@nhs.net or call 0191 512 8484 and ask for the involvement team.

Thank you for sharing your views. Every voice matters.

## Social media posts:

### (Facebook / Instagram / LinkedIn):

#### If you get a gluten-free NHS prescription, we want to hear from you!

The NHS is thinking about stopping prescriptions for gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mix. This could affect people with coeliac disease or other gluten-related conditions. No decision has been made yet.

🗣️ Tell us what you think by taking a short survey:

👉 <https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/nencicb/nenc-gluten-free-2025>

⌚ Closes 25 August 2025

📞 Need help? Contact [NENCICB.Involve@nhs.net](mailto:NENCICB.Involve@nhs.net)  
Your views matter. Please share with anyone who may be affected.

#NHSengagement #GlutenFree #NorthEastNHS  
#YourVoiceMatters



### (Twitter/X / Facebook / Instagram):

#### 🗣️ Do you get gluten-free bread, rolls or flour mix on prescription?

The NHS in the North East and North Cumbria is thinking about stopping these prescriptions – but *no decision has been made yet*.

🗣️ **Have your say**, your views will help the NHS decide what to next.

📄 Take the short survey (5–10 mins): [Insert survey link] <https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/nencicb/nenc-gluten-free-2025>

📅 Open until 25 August 2025

#Coeliac #NHSvoices #HaveYourSay



## Printable poster

<div data-bbox="245 322 328 405"></div> <div data-bbox="534 322 643 383"><b>NHS</b> North East and North Cumbria</div> <div data-bbox="242 412 620 519"><b>Tell us what you think</b> about the proposal to stop providing NHS prescriptions for gluten-free bread, rolls and flour mix...</div> <div data-bbox="242 555 448 645"><p>The only gluten-free products available on NHS prescription are bread, rolls and flour mixes. Your local NHS is thinking about stopping this.</p></div> <div data-bbox="242 654 454 725"><p>Before making a final decision, we want to understand what this means for people and their families.</p></div> <div data-bbox="242 734 456 795"><p>Complete a short survey telling us how you may be affected by the proposed change.</p></div> <div data-bbox="242 801 430 844"><p><b>It's important that we hear your views.</b></p></div> <div data-bbox="242 853 429 889"><p>Scan the QR code to take part. Closing date 25 August 2025.</p></div> <div data-bbox="477 560 600 680"></div> <div data-bbox="474 689 638 725"><p>Other ways to take part in the survey:</p></div> <div data-bbox="474 719 639 896"><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• email us at <a href="mailto:nencicb.involve@nhs.net">nencicb.involve@nhs.net</a></li><li>• call 0191 512 8484</li><li>• or write and tell us your views, send to: Gluten-free survey North East and North Cumbria ICB Pemberton House Collins Avenue Sunderland Enterprise Park Sunderland SR5 3XB</li></ul></div>	<div data-bbox="882 336 935 398"></div> <div data-bbox="802 398 1016 456"><p>GlutenFree-A4poster. pdf</p></div>
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## TV screen

**NHS**

North East and  
North Cumbria

# Do you receive gluten-free bread, rolls or flour mix on NHS prescription?

We want to hear your views. Scan the QR code to take part in our survey.