

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes ICS Gluten-free Food Supply Service

Service Specification

1. Service description

This local service will fund pharmacies and GP dispensing practices to supply gluten free foods to eligible patients with a confirmed diagnosis of gluten enteropathy - Coeliac Disease and Dermatitis Herpetiformis. Providers will be required to:

- a) Provide gluten-free foods under this service only to those patients registered with a GP practice in BLMK ICS and who have a confirmed diagnosis of Coeliac disease or Dermatitis Herpetiformis in their summary care record and meet the eligibility criteria or have a IFR reference number
- b) Provide advice and support on the range and quantities of gluten-free foods available under this scheme.
- c) Agreeing a monthly order with each customer according to maximum 'units' of gluten-free food allowable per patient group below.
- d) Inform the surgery that the patient is being provided with gluten free foods from the pharmacy
- e) Complete an initial Patient Monthly Order Form with the customer and supply further order forms with each monthly supply.
- f) Provide supplies monthly to each requesting patient ensuring that quantity supplied does not exceed the agreed monthly allowance; in exceptional circumstances, a supply greater than 1 month can be made to cover holiday periods as judged appropriate by the supplying pharmacy. There is a maximum of 12 claims per annum per patient.
- g) Ensure the self-declaration is completed on the reverse of the form and document if evidence of eligibility seen
- h) Make monthly returns to BLMK ICB by the 15th of the month to claim reimbursement payments for products supplied in the previous month.
- i) Retain records of supplies to each patient for audit purposes.
- j) Make patient ordering records available to their GP or responsible dietitian on request to support annual patient reviews.
- k) Refer any patient concerns, which cannot easily be dealt with by the pharmacist/dispenser, to the GP.
- l) Provide BMLK ICB with such information as may be required to monitor the uptake and costs of the service.

1.1 Criteria for the supply of gluten free foods are defined below:

- a) Gluten-free foods listed in the Drug Tariff will be allowed under the scheme.
- b) The maximum monthly quantity of food allowed will be determined by the pharmacist/dispenser following in line with guidance provided in this document.
- c) Items selected must be obtainable by the pharmacy or dispensary with no additional out of pocket expenses (charges for postage and handling).

Maximum ‘units’ of gluten-free food allowable per patient group:

Age and sex	Points/Units per month
Child Under 10 years	8
Child 11-18 Years	12
Female 19 years and older	8
Male 19 years and older	12

Gluten-free food ‘Unit’ allocation guide:

Food item	Points/Units
400g bread/rolls/baguettes	1
500g flour/bread mix	2

2. Aims and intended service outcomes

- 2.1 To improve the access and efficiency of supply of gluten-free products to eligible patients
- 2.2 To offer support and advice to patients and their carers on their disease and the gluten-free products available.
- 2.3 To help patients and their carers access additional treatment and advice by offering referral to the GP/Dietitian where appropriate.

3. Service outline

- 3.1 The contractor has a duty to ensure that pharmacists and dispensary staff involved in the provision of the service have relevant knowledge and are trained in the operation of the service.
- 3.2 The contractor has a duty to ensure that pharmacists and dispensary staff involved in the provision of the service are aware of the Coeliac UK guidance and act in accordance with local protocols and NICE guidance.
- 3.3 Access routes to this service are GP/Dietitian referral for existing patients or new patients with a confirmed diagnosis of coeliac disease or dermatitis herpetiformis.
- 3.4 Patient Registration includes:
 - establishing that the person is eligible to access the scheme
 - explaining the scheme details and benefits
 - completing the monthly order of gluten-free products up to the recommended number of units and providing the patient with a form for the next monthly order.
 - Making a note of registration for this service on the patient’s medication records in the pharmacy/dispensary.
 - Notifying the patients registered GP of the supply (initial supply only)
- 3.5 Completion of paperwork:
 - a) Patients GP should be notified by e-mail that patient is being supplied Gluten free foods.

Payment claim – Patient’s monthly order forms should be completed including exception or IFR reference number and submitted by e-mail to BLMK ICB with an invoice (template supplied).

- 3.6 The pharmacy / dispensary must maintain appropriate records of the supply of gluten-free food and interventions by way of health promotional advice and sign-posting to ensure effective ongoing service delivery and audit.
- 3.7 BLMK ICS will provide details of relevant referral points which pharmacy / dispensary staff can use to signpost service users who require further assistance.

4. Payment details

- 4.1.1 BLMK ICS will pay the contractor £10 per month for each eligible patient registered with the pharmacy/dispensary for the service and the ordering of gluten-free food in that month.
- 4.1.2 The cost of the products supplied will be reimbursed at C&D trade price. Gluten-free products have a 'Zero' rating for VAT.
- 4.1.3 The contractor must only supply items listed in the Drug Tariff which can be obtained from wholesalers or directly from the manufacturer without incurring additional 'out of pocket' expenses.
- 4.1.4 Payment claims should be submitted by the 15th of each month. Payment will be made by BLMK ICS within 4 weeks provided claim forms are received by the deadline given.

5. Documentation

- 5.1 Any pharmacy or dispensing doctor participating in this scheme must notify the ICS by email to blmkicb.medsopt@nhs.net.
- 5.2 The GP practice where the patient is registered must be notified of the supply arrangement
- 5.3 Details on Patient Order Forms must be completed at each supply including the exemption declaration on Page 2. Page 1 of the order forms should be sent to the Medicines Optimisation Team at the end of each month with an invoice and a copy stored securely in the pharmacy/dispensary for 2 years with Page 2.
- 5.4 A record must be kept of health advice given to patients as part of this service for audit purposes.
- 5.5 Any gluten-free product supplied must be recorded on the pharmacy/dispensary Patient Medication Record (PMR) system.

6. Termination of Contract

- 6.1 Both the contractor and BLMK ICB may terminate this agreement by giving not less than 3 months' notice in writing to the other party to allow for timely transition of patients. However, if for any reason BLMK ICB has cause for concern over the following:
- Non-compliance with requirements of this service
 - Competency of staff
 - Complaints from the public
 - Complaints from other NHS service providers
- the contractor will be asked to provide suitable explanations in response to questions posed. In the event of a continued concern over contractor ability to meet the conditions of this service, BLMK ICB reserves the right to terminate the agreement with immediate effect.

7. Review Date

- 7.1 The Service Specification and remuneration will be reviewed by April 2026.

Contact details

For service queries:

Medicines Optimisation Team blmkicb.medsopt@nhs.net

For Clinical queries to the Dietetic Services: food.first@nhs.net

Glossary of Terms

Contractor – Community Pharmacy Contractor or Dispensing Doctor

Dispensary – Refers to the dispensary at Dispensing Practices

Dispenser – Dispensary staff at Dispensing Practices

Pharmacy – Community pharmacy

BLMK ICS – Bedfordshire Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System

Staff – Pharmacy or Dispensary staff

Appendices – circulated electronically

1. Patient order form Pages 1 and 2
2. Template invoice
3. Standard Operating Procedure