Basildon and Brentwood   
Clinical Commissioning Group

Phoenix Place

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1st December 2016

DD MM YYYY29 September 2016

Dear

**Gluten Free Food**

Basildon and Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is an NHS organisation led by local GPs who choose and buy most of the health services for the people of Basildon, Brentwood, Billericay and Wickford. The CCG is facing a £14 million deficit in 2016/17 and needs to make savings. As a result, the CCG has been considering all the services it commissions.

One area identified by the CCG where savings can be made is Gluten Free products which are provided to patients on prescription. Historically, these products – which include bread, flour, crackers/crispbreads, pasta, pizza bases, oats, breakfast cereals and xanthan gum – were made available on prescription because they were not easily available for people to buy in shops.

Today these products are widely available from all supermarkets and are sold to the public at prices that are considerably lower than the NHS is charged when bought for use on prescription. There is also a wide variety of naturally gluten free food including fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, poultry, fish, cheese and eggs.

Following a public consultation (Fit for the Future 12 July 2016-12 September 2016), the CCG Board has **decided to stop all Gluten Free products on prescription with effect from 1st January 2017.** The exception to this is pregnant women (from the point of confirmed pregnancy) and young people under the age of 18. These people will continue to receive Gluten Free products on prescription in quantities in line with Coeliac UK guidelines.

**The CCG has asked your GP practice to give you this letter because you have been receiving Gluten Free products on prescription.**

We acknowledge this change may be unwelcome for some patients but the estimated savings will help the CCG to protect essential health services in the best interests of the whole of the local population.

For further information on this decision by the CCG, please see <http://basildonandbrentwoodccg.nhs.uk/fit-for-the-future>

Further dietary advice and guidance is available on the CCG website at <http://basildonandbrentwoodccg.nhs.uk/your-health/dietary-advice>

Yours sincerely,



Dr Arv Guniyangodage

**Chair**