

Putting Nutrition at the Heart of Patient Care

Coeliac disease is an autoimmune condition triggered by the ingestion of gluten resulting in villous atrophy in genetically-susceptible individuals. It is recognised as a multi-system disorder as symptoms can affect any area of the body. The only treatment is a strict lifelong gluten-free diet.

DIETARY ADHERENCE IS CENTRAL TO THE SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT OF COELIAC DISEASE

Following a strict gluten-free diet is challenging for patients with coeliac disease, with adherence rates varying between 42–91%.¹ Studies^{2,3} have shown that a gluten-free prescription supports adherence to the diet, which in turn helps to reduce the risk of associated complications such as osteoporosis, malignancy (intestinal lymphoma), functional hyposplenism and vitamin D deficiency.⁴

PROVIDING A FOUNDATION OF PATIENT SUPPORT

A recent national consultation by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC),⁵ looking at *the availability of gluten-free foods on prescription in primary care*, received almost 8,000 responses from patients, healthcare professionals, national associations, patient associations, NHS organisations and manufacturers of gluten-free foods. The outcome to restrict gluten free products available on prescription to bread products and flour mixes was welcomed by Coeliac UK and other stakeholders involved as it ensures all patients receive a reasonable supply of staple gluten free foods to support them in managing their life-long condition.

This decision will deliver direct savings to the NHS, and it is hoped this will also remove the uncertainty around variations in prescribing practices. It is a fair and equitable solution, which practically mitigates the risk of poor adherence for those patients who may struggle with accessibility, availability and cost issues associated with following a gluten-free diet.

TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The British Specialist Nutrition Association (BSNA), Coeliac UK, the British Dietetic Association and NHS Clinical Commissioners, are all members of a Task and Finish Group, which has been convened by the DHSC to review and restrict the list of gluten-free products available on prescription, as well

as to assess the number of units required to support patients.

BSNA REPRESENTS MANUFACTURERS OF GLUTEN-FREE FOODS ON PRESCRIPTION

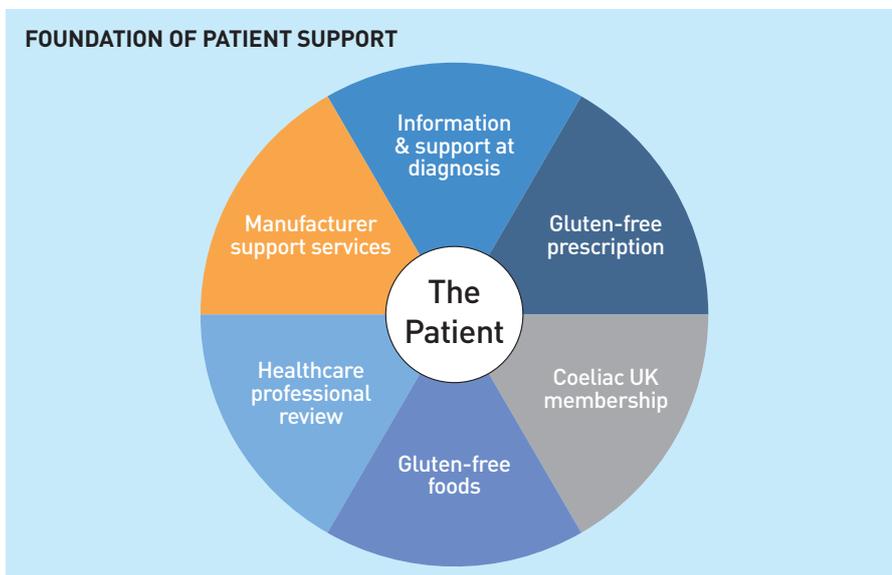
Our mission is to support healthcare professionals in delivering better patient outcomes through appropriate nutrition on prescription. BSNA believes that high quality nutrition support should be at the heart of patient care as it has a key role to play in disease prevention and avoiding multi-morbidities and disease prevention.



ABOUT THE BRITISH SPECIALIST NUTRITION ASSOCIATION

BSNA is the trade association representing the manufacturers of products designed to meet particular nutritional needs of individuals, including specialist products for infants and young children, medical foods for diagnosed disorders and medical conditions, including enteral and parenteral nutrition, and gluten-free products on prescription. www.bsna.co.uk | @BSNA_UK

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