

Press release
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Updated online training to meet the needs of growing gluten free market

Coeliac UK, the leading expert on coeliac disease and the gluten free diet, is urging caterers to take advantage of the charity's fifty years of insight into all things gluten free, through its updated online training course, enabling both private and public sector caterers to meet the needs of the growing gluten free market.

Since the charity first launched the interactive online course in 2014, nearly 7000 people working across a wide range of industries from chefs and catering staff to hospital ward staff and school teaching assistants, have completed the course. An updated version of the course has been launched this week, providing improved usability to enhance the learning experience, as well as allowing participants to track progress against each module and enabling companies to be more in control of their staff training.

Hilary Croft, Chief Executive of Coeliac UK explained: "We are expecting the demand for safe gluten free catering to increase as more people are diagnosed with coeliac disease. Research shows that people with coeliac disease - and the family and friends they eat out with - are currently worth a potential £100 million a year to venues that can cater for them, so this figure is likely to rise."

"However, it is important for all caterers to ensure they are confident and knowledgeable on how to safely cater for the gluten free diet within the law and, for just £70, our newly revised online training course provides essential information to train staff for this expanding gluten free market."

The course, which takes approximately one and half hours to complete, is suitable for all food industry professionals in both the private and public sectors and provides in depth training on:

- understanding coeliac disease and the gluten free diet
- the law on gluten free
- choosing the right ingredients and gluten free storage
- preparing and cooking gluten free food
- cleaning and personal hygiene
- communicating with staff and customers
- monitoring gluten free procedures.

On successful completion of the training, a personalised certificate from Coeliac UK can be download to be displayed or added to training records. Individual access to the training costs £70 and can be purchased from: www.glutenfreetraining.org. If an organisation needs to train multiple staff and monitor their progress this can be arranged by contacting: cateringtraining@coeliac.org.uk.

Coeliac disease is not an allergy or an intolerance but an autoimmune disease where the body's immune system damages the lining of the small bowel when gluten, a protein (found in wheat, barley and rye) is eaten. There is no cure and no medication; the only treatment is a strict gluten free diet for life. 1 in 100 people in the UK has coeliac disease but only 30% of those with the condition have been diagnosed. There are an estimated half a million people in the UK who have the condition yet don't know it.

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For further information, please contact:
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Notes to editors:

- Coeliac disease is a serious illness where the body's immune system reacts to gluten found in food, making the body attack itself.
- Coeliac UK is the national charity for people who need to live without gluten, whether due to coeliac disease or another medical condition requiring a gluten free diet.
- 1 in 100 people in the UK has coeliac disease but half a million people in the UK are undiagnosed.
- Average time to diagnosis is 13 years
- A wide range of case studies are available on request from Coeliac UK
- Gluten is a protein found in wheat (including spelt), rye and barley. Some people are also sensitive to oats. Obvious sources of gluten include breads, pastas, flours, cereals, cakes and biscuits.
- The symptoms of coeliac disease range from mild to severe and can vary between individuals. Not everyone with coeliac disease experiences gut related symptoms; any area of the body can be affected.
- Coeliac UK has a Helpline on 0333 332 2033 and further information can be found at www.coeliac.org.uk
- This year Coeliac UK is campaigning on the need for earlier diagnosis of coeliac disease in children and will be raising awareness of the main symptoms to empower parents to take action. The charity's awareness campaign is taking place from 11-17 May 2020 and will encourage parents who recognise symptoms in their child to take Coeliac UK's online assessment at: www.isitcoeliacdisease.org.uk which will provide them with a result that they can take to their GP to support a conversation about getting their child tested for coeliac disease.
- For more information, please visit www.coeliac.org.uk/AW20.