

## **A Mixed-Methods Study of**

### **Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Related to Gluten-Free Diets in India**

#### **Semi-structured Interview guide (45-60 mins)**

##### **1. Introduction and Context**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. This discussion forms part of a research study exploring professional perspectives on gluten and gluten-free diets (GFDs) within the Indian context. The study seeks to understand how practicing registered dietitians perceive current knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to gluten; the nutritional and clinical challenges associated with GFDs; and the influence of social media, wellness narratives, and dietary trends on patient behaviours.

Given the increasing public interest in gluten-free diets—often beyond medically indicated conditions such as celiac disease—your insights as a practicing professional are valuable for informing evidence-based clinical guidance and public health messaging.

##### **2. Session Objectives**

This session aims to:

- Explore your understanding of gluten and gluten-related disorders in clinical practice.
- Examine patient motivations for adopting gluten-free diets.
- Identify nutritional, behavioural, and counselling challenges encountered in practice.
- Understand perceptions regarding media influence, wellness culture, and dietary trends.
- Explore gaps in public awareness and opportunities for context-specific education in India.

##### **3. Duration and Recording**

The interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes. With your permission, the session will be audio-recorded to ensure accuracy of data capture. All responses will remain confidential and anonymised in reporting.

##### **4. Ground Rules**

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Please feel free to share examples from your clinical or professional experience.
- You may decline to answer any question or withdraw at any time.
- We encourage open and honest responses, even if they reflect challenges or uncertainties in practice.

##### **5. Opening Question**

To begin, could you briefly describe your current area of practice, years of experience, and the extent to which you encounter clients following or inquiring about gluten-free diets?

#### **Knowledge regarding Gluten, GRD and GFDs (15 minutes)**

- What is your knowledge about Gluten and Gluten Related Disease?
- What is your understanding of a gluten-free diet? Can you describe what

types of foods are included and excluded?

- Are you aware of any potential health benefits of following a gluten-free diet, apart from managing gluten-related disorders?
- What, in your opinion, are some common misunderstandings regarding gluten and gluten-free diets?
- Do you think a gluten-free diet can be nutritionally balanced? Are there any nutritional challenges or deficiencies associated with it?

#### **Attitude and Perception of Gluten-Free Diet (10-15 minutes)**

- When would you suggest a gluten free diet to your patient/client?
- When would you consider a gluten-free diet appropriate for someone without a diagnosed gluten-related disorder?
- How do you view the increasing popularity of gluten-free diets among individuals without diagnosed gluten-related disorders?
- Do you regard Gluten free diet as 'healthier' than gluten-containing diet? What do you think about the claims regarding gluten-free products being "healthier" than their gluten-containing counterparts?
- How do you think media or social media affects views on gluten-free diets?

#### **Practice and Counselling Approach (10 minutes)**

- How often do you recommend a gluten-free diet to a patient in your practice?
- What factors do you consider when advising a patient on adopting a gluten-free diet?
- What challenges do you face in counselling patients about gluten and gluten-free diets?
- How do you ensure that patients maintain a balanced and nutritionally adequate gluten-free diet?
- How do you handle cases where patients are resistant to adopting a gluten-free diet, even when medically appropriate?

#### **Perspective on Public Awareness and Trends (10 mins)**

- What is your impression on the public awareness regarding Gluten and Gluten Related Disorders?
- Do you think there's enough public awareness regarding the need for a gluten-free diet among those with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity?
- What do you think needs to be done to improve public or professional understanding of gluten and gluten-free diets?
- How do you see the role of gluten-free diets evolving in the future? Do you think it will become more mainstream, especially for individuals without gluten-related disorders?

#### **Conclusion (5 minutes)**

- Determine any additional questions
- Thank participants for help