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Cake ban for hospital patients

The Women's Institute in Saffron Walden has been banned from making cakes for hospital patients due to health fears.



The Women's Institute is banned from making cakes for patients

The ladies of the WI stepped in to help after being asked to provide cakes to two wards for the elderly at Saffron Walden Community Hospital.

But Uttlesford Primary Care Trust has said it could no longer accept the cakes after taking medical advice.

Health officers ruled that because the kitchens where they are cooked were not checked, risks could not be eliminated.

'Hospital bureaucracy'

A Trust spokesperson said: "We have to adhere to strict hygiene criteria and without inspecting the kitchens of WI members who prepare the cakes we cannot eliminate all potential risks.

"The hospital treats very vulnerable elderly patients, many of whom have special dietary requirements. Patient safety is our top priority.

"We are not in any way suggesting the cakes the WI has kindly provided us are unsafe."

Carol LeClercq, secretary of Raadwinter WI - one of 12 Essex institutes who had been supplying cakes - said: "Our first reaction was anger because some of our members had been baking for 50 or 60 years but then it turned to amusement.

"I presume someone had a tick list and couldn't count the Ts crossed or the Is dotted.

"We spoke to another environment health officer who said we were at the extremely low end of the risk scale and it was just the way some people interpreted the rules.

"The hospital is upset because the patients enjoyed the cakes which we think are very nutritious and free of artificial additives.



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"It is strange that the relatives of patients can bring in cakes and these are shared but nothing is said about that."

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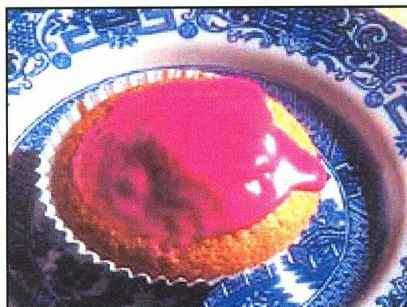
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U-turn puts WI cake back on menu

[England](#)**A Women's Institute's cakes are back on the menu at an Essex hospital after a ban on their treats was lifted.**[Northern Ireland](#)[Scotland](#)[Wales](#)[Business](#)[Politics](#)[Health](#)[Education](#)[Science/Nature](#)[Technology](#)[Entertainment](#)

Members of a local WI group had been told their cakes could pose a health risk to patients at Saffron Walden Community Hospital.

Patients can once again have their cake and eat it

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But Uttlesford Primary Care Trust has now overturned the ban after examining the issue in "greater depth".

A spokeswoman for the WI said they were delighted the patients could again enjoy cake with their afternoon tea.

The group baked 12 cakes a month for patients, but the trust said it decided to stop the supply as it could not guarantee the patients' safety without inspecting the kitchens where they were baked.

'Immediate effect'

The WI staged two days' of campaigning to have the baked goodies reinstated, contacting newspapers and other news outlets.

On Thursday evening a spokeswoman for Uttlesford PCT said that after advice from Essex Strategic Health Authority and the Health Protection Agency, it had reconsidered its decision.

"The PCT will accept cakes provided by the WI with immediate effect," she said.

"Having examined the issue in greater depth, Uttlesford PCT has taken the view that the negligible risk to patients is greatly outweighed by the pleasure they can give."

Carol LeClercq, secretary of the Radwinter WI, said she was overjoyed with the decision.

"All that publicity paid off and it has worked," she said.

Before the ban was lifted, Mrs LeClercq said the WI had felt a "little insulted" by the ban.

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