

# Proposed Sanitary Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill

## Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

on behalf of an organisation

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

*No Response*

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

School, college or university

Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Ayrshire College Students Association

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

## Page 7: Your views on the proposal

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

Partially supportive

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

The introduction of the provision of free sanitary products across Scotland is one we welcome. Among students this will relieve ever increasing financial pressure and insecurities. For some students being able to buy sanitary products or not determines whether or not they can attend college, this in turn affects their education which in turn affects other things. If sanitary products were available to everyone who menstruates in Scotland it would alleviate a lot of unnecessary pressure.

## Page 8: Universal provision of sanitary products

Q2. Do you think a universal, card-based system (modelled on the c-card system for free condoms) would be an effective means of providing sanitary products for free to those who need them?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

We think this model could work but not as a stand alone approach, this needs to be accessible and inclusive of everyone who needs access to sanitary products and having to physically collect these in person, may not be practical for some people. The C-Card system requires you to give your personal details including your residential address. We would be concerned that if this is the only approach that some of the people who would benefit most would actually be unable to access. (Homeless etc)

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view in relation to a card-based system?

Other (please specify)

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

We believe that anyone should be able to access the free products. Priority should be given to those most in need and should not automatically be restricted to those on certain benefits, or low incomes as this is not always the people who are in most need. For education establishments we believe that it should be available to all students and staff on campuses.

Q4. Do you have a view on which locations would be most suitable for dispensing free sanitary products (e.g. GP surgeries, pharmacies, community centres, health clinics)?

We think there should be wide availability with different locations and distribution methods being used, this would mean people can access them both where is suitable and practical but also where they feel comfortable doing so.

Within educational institutions service staff distributing could help to avoid embarrassment and put people at ease.

## Page 11: Schools, colleges and universities

Q5. Do you agree that there should be specific obligations on schools, colleges and universities to make sanitary products available for free (via dispensers in toilets)?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

We believe that sanitary products should be available for free in schools, colleges and universities. For some students having sanitary products could determine whether or not they can attend their classes. Having free dispensers in the toilets can only be one way as not all students would be comfortable using the dispensers. There also has to be consideration given to the disposal side of this and hygienic disposal systems need to be available in all toilets. We believe that the funding side of this is a matter for Government, and not solely down to institutions. Funding should not be cut in other areas to support the costs of this which is ultimately a health issue.

## Page 12: Personal experience (questions 6 and 7 are for individual respondents only)

Q6. Have you ever struggled to access or afford sanitary products during menstruation? (e.g. financial barriers, unexpected circumstances, health issues)

Not applicable: I do not need or use sanitary products

Q7. If sanitary products were available for free, which of the following would apply to you?

Not applicable: I do not need or use sanitary products

## Page 14: Financial implications

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost-neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
(a) Government and the public sector (e.g. local authorities, the NHS)		X				
(b) Colleges and universities			X			
(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)						X
(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)					X	

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

It is reasonable to assume as the Government and Public sector will have some increase in cost as they fund the free provision. The cost to educational institutions we would like to see as being kept to the minimum possible.

Q9. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

Sustainable and reusable products would reduce the cost in the long term, although initially it would require quite a bit of investment.

## Page 16: Equalities

Q10. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

We feels this can only really have a positive impact. we would also hope that with the amount of attention this topic is receiving it will help make people more comfortable talking about women's health. As mentioned previously having access to sanitary products can be the difference between someone being able to attend their studies and so overall this will help people achieve and improve their life chances.

Q11. In what ways could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

By making sure that there are different ways of accessing the products, making it accessible and inclusive for everyone, taking into consideration the protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) so for example make sure the products are suitable for religious needs.

## Page 18: Sustainability

Q12. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

Q12. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

**Please explain the reasons for your response:**

- Sustainable and reusable options should be seriously considered as a means of redressing these issues. While more expensive as an initial-cost, these are less expensive in the long-term. This initial cost could be subsidised so that they can be offered at a discounted rate compared to RPP.

## Page 19: General

Q13. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

*No Response*