

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

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Save the Girl Child Movement

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?

Fully Supportive

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

Having a menstrual cycle is not a choice. It is a biological disposition - unlike sex where one can choose to have it or not (save for incidences of assault). Condoms are made available for free so should sanitary wear. It's not just an issue of sexual and reproductive health it also relates to dignity.

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?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response

I think it is a great start. However speaking on behalf of an organization working in Zimbabwe (a developing country) there may be other access issues that may arise triggering the need to remodel/adapt the c-card system deployed for widening access to sanitary wear.

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

The card should be available only to those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I have chosen the answer above and not, "The card should be available to anyone; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products" because I think that the system should perhaps be rolled out in stages with unlimited access by everyone being the ultimate goal. One also wants to avoid a case of these products being sold and the menstruous/menstruating girls and women in need of them not being able to access them.

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)?

Community centres and public toilets.

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

Absolutely. A girl or woman may find themselves without sanitary wear on campus or at school and without money to pay for it or immobile to travel to a point outside of the toilet where they would have noticed the

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)?

challenge.

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)

Yes, occasionally

Please explain or give an example of your experience if you feel able to do so.

My cycle shifted. I rushed from home and forgot to pack my sanitary in anticipation of my period some days ahead. I didn't have change for the dispenser in the bathroom on campus either. Also £1 for 2 pads is extremely expensive.

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

I would not expect to claim free products

Please explain the reasons for your response

Personally I can afford pads. Free sanitary products would apply to me personally in the event of unexpected circumstances. However in a wider regard sanitary wear is usually a matter of either 1) affordability or 2) accessibility - as I have just mentioned.

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...)					X	

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

consumers of sanitary products)						
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Please explain the reasons for your response

I think in the short and immediate term for institutions there will be an increase in cost as infrastructure is set up but eventually there will be gains/savings in the medium- to long-term. Many of which will go beyond quantifiable metrics. It will cut across ostensibly unrelated indicators too like school attendance and improved psycho-social outcomes, gender parity in education. Hence it is worth it.

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

I think by being rolled out in stages. Prioritizing low-income areas at first with the end goal of universal access.

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

Mentioned earlier

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

As I mentioned earlier, others selling the sanitary products for profit or income and they are not reaching the menstruating girls and women who need them.

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

Page 19: General

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

Earlier mentioned