

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Wellbeing Scotland

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**

We work primarily with survivors of childhood abuse many of whom suffer significant shame and challenging feelings about menstruation. Many were abused while menstruating while being told by their abuser that they were "dirty" or should feel ashamed. Those negative feelings were present in your woman and girls while menstruating in school, college or elsewhere. periods do not stick to a rigid timeline and can start unexpectedly. For many poverty is an issue and it is impossible to find money to purchase sanitary products. We know of women who have had to use toilet paper with the fear that it will fall out and further embarrass them. The feelings of embarrassment are an issue for most women not only survivors of abuse and we feel that access to sanitary products for all should be a basic human right.

## 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**

I do not have enough knowledge of this scheme to comment effectively but on reading the consultation it looks like a positive option.

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

The card should be available to anyone; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

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

To restrict access would breach confidentiality and require scrutiny that would defeat the purpose of the scheme

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)?

Railway stations, schools, colleges, shopping centres, workplaces, health clinics, GP surgeries

## 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**

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)?

This would make them accessible to all

## 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

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

I would not expect to claim free 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	

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

n/a

## 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**

Many survivors of abuse have disabilities relevant to gynaecological matters leading to issues with heavy and unexpected bleeding that can have a significant impact on day to day life. It can make women afraid to leave home and make them disabled by society not meeting their needs based on gender and disability.

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

An establishment concerned about the cost could be shown the benefits of improved attendance e.g. at college and outcomes in achievement

Shopping centres using the scheme would have more people using them

The positive press from being part of the scheme would be beneficial to any organisation

## 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

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

Reduction of the impact on women of unexpected bleeding and acceptance of menstruation (this Bill has made it easier to talk about periods and raised awareness) will help the economy with women being more confident to have good attendance at work/ school/ college

## Page 19: General

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

This is absolutely necessary to ensure equality for women