

# 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

Public sector body (Scottish/UK Government/Government agency, local authority, NDPB)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Elaine Nisbet, Anti-Poverty and Welfare Advice Manager, West Lothian Council

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

## 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**

yes, it would remove the stigma however may be difficult to fund.

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; its use should be restricted (e.g. by limiting the number of products that may be claimed each month)

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

Resources should be targeted at those most in need. It should also be accompanied by the opportunity to get access to quality advice and support

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)?

I think it would be best if this could be co-located with other services to reduce stigma and to help advice and support to be embedded.

## 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)?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

I do agree that there should be a specific obligation but not that it should be dispensed via dispensers. These only hold a couple of products and would only help in an emergency. It also needs to embed help and advice

## 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)

No

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
<b>(a) Government and the public sector (e.g. local authorities, the NHS)</b>	X					
<b>(b) Colleges and universities</b>						
<b>(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)</b>				X		
<b>(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)</b>				X		

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

The Bill could look at how the products are procured across the whole of Scotland and look at joint procurement which should reduce costs. There should also be decisions taken about what choice (if any) of sanitary products will be available. If they could be co-located with other services already dispensing information/medicine etc then this would also reduce costs.

## 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?

Slightly positive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Whilst I do feel that this will have a positive effect on equality, care will need to be taken to consider the protected characteristics and there are particular needs for those who have just had a baby alongside those who have incontinence problems who may feel disadvantaged in terms of feminine hygiene being restricted to those who menstruate.

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

*No Response*

## 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?

Unsure

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

at this stage given that there has been no decision made regarding criteria and targeting versus universal provision, it is difficult to comment.

## Page 19: General

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

Period is one aspect of an overall poverty agenda. Reducing costs for households is one way in which to mitigate against the effects of poverty. All interventions should be linked in with good quality advice and support to help people consider wider implications, areas of help