

Proposed Sanitary Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

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

an individual

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".)

Student (at school, college or university)

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Georgie Harris

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

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

Just over half of the population will experience their period every month, yet so many people don't have access to sanitary products. Access to these products is absolutely essential for the health and wellbeing of people who have periods. Austerity has also hit women hardest, meaning that lots of these women on reduced incomes may not be able to afford to buy sanitary products they desperately need.

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

People could pay for sanitary products if they felt like they could afford them and the free products would be better going to someone with a lower income, meaning the scheme would work in allowing those worst off to access free sanitary products. It would also be an easy way of ensuring people can access them freely, without the potential embarrassment of having to ask the cashier at the checkout to not charge them for the pack of pads/tampons etc, as a card is simple proof that they need free sanitary products.

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

The card should be available to anyone; 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.

It may be hard to set a cut-off limit based on income, I feel that those on higher incomes e.g. MPs/MSPs would automatically know that maybe they don't need to use the card to buy their sanitary products.

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)?

Pharmacies would be most useful as they are on every high street, easily accessible, and some people may feel embarrassed about going into a health clinic (especially if it was a sexual health clinic) or to their GP to claim their free sanitary products, due to the stigma involved.

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

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The vast majority of women and girls have periods - we shouldn't be discriminated on based on our gender.

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 expect to claim free products occasionally

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	

Please explain the reasons for your response

People who are struggling to pay for sanitary products would really benefit from this scheme, but realistically it needs money put into it, which the government should spend.

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

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Limiting the number of products that can be claimed each month may help.

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

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

Potentially there could be some harmful discourse around trans people who have periods e.g. trans men who may still menstruate, so it should be stated in the Bill that it isn't just cis women who menstruate, or something like "anyone who has a period".

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?

No Response