

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".)

Member of the public

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 would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

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

I am fully supportive of the proposal to make sanitary products available free of charge to those who need them. Menstruation is a biological fact for 50% the population, and the added financial burden that it places on women in poverty is unacceptable. No one should have to choose between eating and necessities. The card scheme seems well thought out, and provision within educational contexts will provide female students with access to a simple necessity that helps them to access education on an more equal footing to their male peers.

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

Assuming that it were adopted by health and social care offices widely, the proposed model should provide access and some levels of monitoring of the service whilst being accessible in places where people who need the scheme should go anyway.

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.

There should not be restrictions on how many products are claimed each month. Different people bleed at different rates and for different periods of time. There is no cap for monthly bleeding so there should be no monthly cap on protection. Service users should not be forced to demonstrate their need for the service, this would be degrading.

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 that as many health and social facilities as possible in all communities should dispense sanitary products. The scheme is only meaningful if people have access to the products that they need without being forced to travel, spending time and money that they may not have.

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)?

Menstruating students should not be put at an educational disadvantage because of an unavoidable biological process. So as to avoid students missing educational opportunities the availability of free sanitary products in schools and FE/HE campuses is a very good idea. Students living in poverty should not have to worry about menstruation on top of all of their other concerns.

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
(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

Clearly there are costs involved in purchasing sanitary products for the government and educational establishments. The intention is that individuals who need relief from the costs of purchasing the products would see a reduction in cost, or at least not have to make a choice between food and sanitary products.

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

No Response

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?

Other than the monetary cost (which is not all that high), I don't think that there are any negatives. It increases access to education for women and helps address period poverty and one of the financial structural inequalities that underlies modern society.

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:

In addition to providing disposable sanitary products, reusable and sustainable products could be included or promoted through the scheme. It offsets negative social/economic implications for women/menstruators.

Page 19: General

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

No Response