

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Rachel Moyes

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?

I personally believe that, as women have no choice in the matter of menstruation, they should not be forced to pay a price for products which are necessary for general quality of life as well as to sustain a right to sanitation.

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

Do not know much information about this system, but if it provides female sanitary products in an easily accessible fashion for all those who require them, then it would likely be a good idea.

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.

Placing a restriction on these products would likely lead to issues as it is difficult to quantify how much of a product an individual will require per month, as this is extremely variable. There is no point restricting access to something that is unlikely to be abused or misused, as I believe would be the case in this scenario.

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)?

All of the suggested would be suitable outlets, however they may be inconvenient and also potentially inaccessible during certain hours of the day. People may have to go out of their way to receive their free products, so perhaps some kind of outlet in supermarkets may be more suitable.

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

Students already often struggle with the day to day costs of living, and having to pay for expensive sanitary products on top of that can be difficult.

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

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

I have not personally, but I do know that many do, and also that for homeless women, menstruation is a huge issue as they cannot afford any kind of products at all, which hugely decreases their sanitation and quality of life further. Free products would definitely benefit many groups, regardless of whether it should be seen as something women have a "right" to or not, and should therefore be implemented.

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

I would expect to claim free products occasionally

Please explain the reasons for your response

I do not personally see that I would frequently need use of such a free service, but that isn't to say that I wouldn't in the future.

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

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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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

Menstruation is not an optional bodily function for half of the population. Whilst it is true that neither are drinking/eating/clothing one's self, these are all necessities which do not possess a sex disparity. Condoms are free in order to reduce unwanted pregnancy rates and STI burden, as well as the costs associated with treating these, which are of course important focus points. Whilst I support condoms being widely available free of charge, sex is at the end of the day a decision and those who do menstruate do not have this leisure of choice, and it is unfair to provide one service to benefit the health of a large proportion of the population, whilst not recognising the need of many women for sanitary products (especially those who are of low incomes and homeless) in order to maintain a baseline of quality of life and cleanliness.

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

I think that implementing this bill would be seen as a huge step towards equality and more socialist ideologies, which would no doubt be seen positively by many members of the public, especially those who do suffer financially, women, and younger people. Whilst this bill would, of course, be at a cost to the government, in terms of benefit to the population it would be worthwhile and I do not believe that, if properly managed, the system would be abused so would be largely beneficial to all.

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:
as in previous question

Page 19: General

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

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nope