

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

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Fully Supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response

Toilet paper is provided free in these places and therefore menstrual products should be too as they fall under the same category.

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 am not familiar with the c-card system.

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

Other (please specify)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I would need to see more information from reports on the c-card system to know which the fairest option would be in this case.

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 already stock this type of product so this seems the logical location.

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

They offer free toilet paper don't they? What is the difference?

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

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

I got my first period at 13 years old whilst on a school canal boat trip in 1996. It took all day to find a pharmacy because of the location and as all staff were male no-one had thought to bring anything like this along. I had leakage which my schoolmates saw and it was humiliating and really affected my self esteem and confidence at school.

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

Although I always try to be prepared on occasion I have been caught out and had to 'borrow' from others or bundle tissue into my knickers. An alternative option would be welcome.

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)?

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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

Please explain the reasons for your response

This is a good move that addresses gender inequality which is still rife in our country. Recent reports show very slow progress on gender equality, see this article: <https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2017/oct/11/uk-no-further-forward-on-tackling-gender-inequality-eu-league-table-shows> If menstruation affected men as well as women I have no doubt these initiatives would have been set up long ago. Toilet roll is provided free and it should be classed in the same category. These items are not 'optional'. As it stands currently it is a clear case of discrimination against women, and in particular women on low incomes.

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

Treat every person fairly, run a trial, listen to the users, and fix anything that isn't working before rolling it out fully.

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:

Increase taxes on products bad for health (sugar) and use the cash to fund positive ideas like this one. Eco-friendly products are widely available (visit any good health product retailer) that don't use plastics, harsh chemicals, and don't destroy hang around in the environment when disposed of. We have a duty to future generations to promote these ecological products, or be looked back on by future generations as failing to act when the planet was being devastated by human consumption. It may be a small act but government should not back away from it's responsibility to it's people.

Page 19: General

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

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Loo roll is also a 'sanitary' product, but we are not asked to bring our own to these environments. Menstrual products shouldn't be any different to loo roll.