

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Anne Dean

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

This proposal is long overdue. While many women in Scotland can afford to purchase sanitary products a growing number, who are economically excluded, or, becoming so, due to the so called austerity agenda of the Tory government in WM and decisions made by the SNP government in the SP. However, the overarching principle, that there is a basic physiological unmet need requiring SG legislation to ensure that basic personal and public health and safety risks are met through provision of sanitary products in all public toilets throughout Scotland, stands above any government agenda, and should have been included as part of UK public health and health and safety at work legislation. The attitudes and cultural norms of the past clearly came into play, it is time to put those aside and do the right thing.

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?

No Response

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

There is no need for a card scheme

Please explain the reasons for your response.

There should be no need for a system of any kind. This need is physiological and any woman should be able to claim products on demand.

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)?

These items should be available for free at any location where there is a duty of confidentiality. Health centres, local pharmacies, schools, clinics etc. Demand may vary, so there would need to be reasonable storage space and access for delivery vehicles, which may exempt some buildings. It may be that health boards through local HSCPs would be responsible for ensuring accessibility, with schools, colleges and other community centres being involved depending on the needs of local communities.

The accessibility and availability should be taken into account. The location and opening times must be as unrestricted as possible. There might be a need for some access during weekends for example to allow access for working women, if local chemists are not included in the scheme.

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

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, frequently

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

There have been times in my teenage years and when personal and family budgets were under pressure, when I found affordability an issue despite being in full employment throughout the past 40 plus years. It is unjustifiable to expect impoverished women have no choice but to use in order to function normally and without the anxiety of extra cost whenever, they have their period, or suffer from a condition requiring sanitary protection.

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

Not applicable: I do not need or use sanitary 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

Businesses, factories and public services, may experience a significant cost annually, depending on the numbers of women within the workforce and their economic status.

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

Encouraging the use of sustainable products such as mooncups.

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 proposal will send a clear message to society that menstruation is a natural and necessary experience for women. The provision of free products should ensure that the financial restrictions that some women experience are lifted and there would be fewer girls/women missing out on school, college and university, and those that struggle to afford sanitary products when working or seeking work would be eliminated.

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

There will be no negative impact on equality.

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:

Promoting sustainable or eco-friendly products.

Page 19: General

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

The proposed bill is long overdue. This provision will have an enabling effect on the lives of so many women of any age who have the need for these products for whatever reason.
Thank you Monica for the effort you have made in this campaign.