

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".)

Politician (MSP/MP/peer/MEP/Councillor)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Mark Griffin MSP

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

Feminine hygiene products should be a right for all, not a privilege. This Bill would help to end period poverty and the harmful stigma that can be caused when women and girls do not have access to the products they need. When we consistently hear of appeals for feminine hygiene products for food banks, this evidence suggests some are having to go without, so a new universal service backed up by law would help correct this.

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

The c-card works well and removes the barriers to access. Another good example is in gay pubs and bars where condoms are provided free for collection, without any interaction, card or form to be completed, which again reduces barriers to access. These are widely used which in turn reduces the stigma associated with using these.

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.

Access should be unlimited; sanitary products are inexpensive to produce or supply wholesale. As per the response to question 3, there should be minimal barriers to access in order to reduce stigma.

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)?

Locations that those in poverty are most likely to access; both in public sector locations like those listed above, as well as private sector locations, which includes pharmacies and other high street locations.

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

I take the view that this should be less of an obligation on the school, college or university to incorporate into its budget, rather free sanitary products are available across public sector locations. This will undoubtedly include schools, colleges and universities (where young women will attend most frequently) but could be purchased

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and provided under a central scheme more strategically.

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 Response

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

No Response

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

Take-up is expected amongst the portion of the population who experience period poverty, rather than the female population as a whole, as such the estimated costs seem reasonable. Costs are already borne across some parts of the public sector already, and as such these costs will be better shared. This would be a preventative measure which will help reduce costs resulting from poor menstrual hygiene.

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

As per the responses to questions 3 and 5, reducing the administration of the scheme, and procuring and delivering a scheme centrally (rather than placing obligations) could help reduce costs.

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

Women and girls face a monthly cost as a result of menstruation. If this cost cannot be met, they face stigma and potential health risks from poor menstrual hygiene. For those who cannot bear these costs, this Bill would have a positive impact. Attention should be paid the selection of products available, with provision included to ensure that any specialist requirements can be accessed on prescription.

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

No Response

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