

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Sophie Dodds

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
Because sanitary items are essential for a normal life

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

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

The card should be available to anyone; its use should be restricted (e.g. by limiting the number of products that may be claimed each month)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I believe the card should be available to anyone as this will encourage use and reduce stigma, but that potential misuse of the scheme should be offset by making supply should be limited. However I think the upper limit should be generous and allow for a certain amount of stockpiling, or collecting on behalf of someone else etc.

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 above, but especially pharmacies as they are prevalent and open longer hours than any of the others, and therefore a more convenient option for the time-poor or physically restricted.

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

Yes. As much as we expect these places to provide loo roll.

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 always been able to buy sanitary products. However they are expensive and I am living on a limited budget. For someone in my situation I believe the end to VAT on sanitary products is more relevant.

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 would probably collect free products when the opportunity arose.

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

With a-c I am basing my answers on my perception of the financial impact of women being incapacitated due lack of available products. d is self-evident..

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

The card scheme is possibly overly bureaucratic and would involve a lot of admin costs, especially if it was income-assessed. How about allowing a tax break for companies that provide sanitary products directly to those who need them? And leave the companies to deal with the distribution etc. Just off the top of my head.

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

Massively positive. Because the fact that we see sanitary products as any less essential than loo roll is highly symptomatic of a sexist society.

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

See previous comments about scrapping card-scheme or at least removing 'income assessment issue'. This would also help those who did not wish to disclose or discuss their menstruation status.

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?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response:

There's no getting around the fact that sanitary products are environmentally unfriendly. However, I do not think that protecting the environment should start with punishing the poor (there are lots of other measures that should be prioritised by the Scottish gov.) Moon cups are a more environmental option, so the scheme should include these as an option. And where possible products made from recycled materials should be used.

Page 19: General

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

No Response