

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".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Jen Calder

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

Too long have women been made to feel ashamed of a non controllable bodily function that happens to the majority of us. In order to be equal to our male counterparts we cannot have women missing vital education time due to something so easily fixed. In these times of austerity so many women will not have access to sanitary products which are a basic human right. Young menstruators who rely on parents or guardians for money and have no access to their own money are missing time in education because of their period, in 2017 this is unacceptable. It's bad enough we don't get paid the same as our male counterparts there is no way we should now miss opportunity in equal education. A reminder to all men, that anything you can do, I can do bleeding.

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

There is still too much stigma attached to periods that this would not work. 1/3 of women are ashamed of their period so why would that same 1/3 of women go to ask for and collect them from a health centre? They should be made free and readily available in all public toilets, schools colleges and universities without the need for card based systems.

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.

Stock bathrooms with sanitary products the way we do toilet roll, soap, hand towels. The machines are already there, just remove the payment function. Limiting the amount used is irresponsible, all menstruation cycles are different. People with heavy flow (like myself) use a combination of pads and tampons and on some days need to change every 30 mins-1hour. Up during the night to change so I don't leak on my bed, and layering up night time pads. If there were a standard limitation people with heavy flows would be disadvantaged.

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)?

Any local authority/public body building like the above listed. Schools, colleges, universities, religious buildings, hygiene bins in supermarkets where there are food bank collections. If they are available in every public owned building then a menstruator will never be too far away from accessing products when they need them.

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

No one who menstruates should be disadvantaged in accessing education because of their period.

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 am extremely fortunate that I have never personally experienced period poverty. However, growing up and going to school in a disadvantaged area, there must have been so many young women who missed school because of no access to sanitary products and the stigma surrounding periods. Like many others there have been times I've taken my period unexpectedly and there haven't been facilities available to buy a tampon, so many of us will know the feeling of wrapping up a wad of toilet roll to put in your pants. At the age of 25 I would still be embarrassed to ask another woman/person who menstruates for a tampon because there is still so much shame and stigma.

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

I would not expect to claim free products

Please explain the reasons for your response

I wouldn't claim simply because I am fortunate enough that I can afford to buy sanitary products. Having them available everywhere would be great for the times you're out and run out or take your period unexpectedly. Although it doesn't affect me directly I strongly support fellow menstruators right to access sanitary products regardless of gender, income or other circumstances. It is a basic human right.

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			

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

(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

To buy in bulk these products will be extremely cheap and should be a standard part of ordering other hygiene products like toilet roll and soap. Manufacturers will benefit as there will likely be a supply increase. There is money available to address this issue, but a true mark of the existing gender inequality that we face is that cost could possibly be used in this circumstance as an opposing argument to a person's basic dignity.

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

Penalising tax evasion although this is not a devolved power. Review of resource in services we already provide e.g as part of prescription service.

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

It is one more barrier brought down to allow menstruators to be equal to their male counterparts

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

Involve people who menstruate in the development of the policy as opposed to middle class white men who have absolutely no idea what it is like to experience period poverty

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?

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Yes

Page 19: General

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

No Response