

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Liz Warren-Corney

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

The cost of sanitary towels and tampons is really quite ridiculous and falls disproportionately on those in low incomes, which includes families and students. In my own family there were four girls and the cost to my parents of sanitary protection for all of us was astronomical. Periods are awful, can happen unexpectedly and can be unexpectedly heavy. No-one should have to decide to stay home instead of going to school because they don't have enough sanitary protection to make it through the day.

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've not heard of the c-card system for free condoms.

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.

making the card available to anyone is a way of destigmatising it. As this bill is about school aged children and university students it is not completely unlimited. In any benefit system there are people who fail to qualify for the benefit but are barely managing or are experiencing particular hardship anyway so making the card available to everyone in school/university means those people will be helped. In any case periods are something which only affects women, meaning they are disproportionately impoverished and a universal card would help redress that imbalance. The amount of sanitary products absolutely should be unlimited. Periods are not a choice, people can't opt for lighter periods. Women suffering heavier periods are the ones most at risk from period poverty and most likely to be suffering other health problems such as anemia or fibroids. They shouldn't be penalised for their health problems.

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)?

I think the free sanitary products should be issued in school/university to encourage people to come into the school/university.

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)?

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Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response

periods start unexpectedly!! This could make the difference between public humiliation and / or going home early or being able to stay in school all day and without humiliation. My first period started in school without warning. I was lucky enough to bump into a friend in the toilets just after I'd frantically stuffed my pants with toilet paper and borrow a pad from her.

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've found myself at the end of the month eeking out pads well after they stopped being comfortable. I've also on more than one occasion found myself starting early without pads in the house because I put off buying them because of the cost. On one occasion I was suffering from a particular nasty flu virus and unable to walk at all and my period started 10 days early with nothing in the house. I had to text my friend and ask her to bring some over.

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

I would expect to claim free products regularly

Please explain the reasons for your response

Whilst I don't need many now if sanitary products were available to me for free I absolutely would claim them. I must have spent thousands and thousands of pounds over my lifetime on them. I would assume there would be a system whereby I could pick up what I needed regularly but no more than I would need for the month. I believe that this bill is about schools and universities however and I wouldn't qualify for those.

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	X					

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

authorities, the NHS)						
(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)?

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

I think it will make it easier for women and girls to access education.

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

the only negative impact I can think of is the cost and that is best handled by promoting the idea to the tax payer in the advance as something about fairness and benefit to the whole community

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:

The provision of free sanitary protection to women and girls in education by the Scottish Government will give the government an opportunity to drive change towards more environmentally friendly sanitary protection

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?

through the funding mechanisms. The number of women in education having periods is unlikely to increase significantly over time so the budget for this change should not need to significantly change once it has been set.

Page 19: General

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

No Response