

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Livia Smith

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

Sanitary products are not a luxury item, they are a necessity. No women should feel held back by the nature of their bodies.

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

I think this would work well, providing the system has the right promotional support and the products are conveniently accessible.

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.

Unlimited access to the products may cause excessive environmental damage. Alternatively, the promotion of environmentally friendly options, like moon cups, could be given. Equally, the government could work with manufacturers to create products with more degradable materials. I don't agree with the idea that any women should have to ration their sanitary products, however, I do support the fact that we need to account for the waste this may ensue.

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 believe pharmacies would be the most convenient option.

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

At school you are restricted, during those hours, to remain within the institution. Those in this position, needing sanitary products, may be in a situation where they may have misplaced their own or come on their period unprepared. Providing free access to sanitary products at school would limit anxiety around instances like those mentioned above, in turn, creating a better learning environment.

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

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 currently have the Mirena IUS coil fitted which means I very rarely bleed from menstruation.

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	

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

Unsure.

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 reduce the stigma attached to periods and the anxiety women feel about getting them. Providing full accessibility to those who need sanitary products through public campaigning will broaden the social discussion.

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

Providing public education on the significant impact this bill will make on those who currently struggle with the issue of period poverty- Emphasising both the physical and psychological effects that come with not being able to afford the proper sanitary protection.

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:

Whilst providing free sanitary products would clearly cost the government money and raise concern for possible environmental impact, there are alternatives and ways to avoid these factors becoming a problem. Options like moon cups and reusable sanitary pads are available and would certainly decrease the amount of waste and economical expense. Socially it can only be beneficial. Opening the discussion of periods will detach the topic from its labels of 'uncleanliness' and stop those feeling apologetic for menstruating.

Page 19: General

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

No Response