

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".)

Student (at school, college or university)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Lyndsay Clelland

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

Thousands of women go without sanitary products because of the cost. It is a necessary item which women need yet are charged for. There needs to be a basic provision of these items for every single person that needs them. Sanitary products can cost upwards of £3 a box which won't even last some people a day or two. It is a medical issue, hearing stories of people using socks or sponges or napkins stresses just how much of a health issue this is. Everyone has the right to safe and hygienic medical products, and sanitary products should be no different.

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

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

There is no need for a card scheme

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I think there can be a lot of stigma around giving just low income people a card similar to the stigma of using food banks etc. Giving a card to everyone would be extremely difficult, especially as some people may rely on others to buy their products (disabled people for example) so there would perhaps need to be a system where an authorized user can present the card. Women can't avoid menstruation, so basic provisions should be available for everyone regardless, just as treatments for other health issues are. By having free provisions for everyone this won't mean tampon companies will go under, some people will still buy their preferred products and just use free provisions when they need to, the same as most people do with other over the counter medicine.

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 public toilets, Pharmacies, health clinics, community centres, schools and colleges. I think an online ordering system might be particularly useful, as people can order discreetly and collect in a suitable place i.e a pharmacy, where it can still look like they are just picking up any other prescription, which would perhaps make people more comfortable. This would also save on people turning up to collect and the location not having any as they'd be able to know in advance if products are available.

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

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)?

Please explain the reasons for your response

Students and young people are often forgotten about as being vulnerable or low income. Many many young people live off the bare minimum to survive and for some the money spent on sanitary products is the equivalent to a week's food or wages.

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.

As a student living away from home, all my loan and wages went on rent and travel to work. I barely had enough left over for food. On more than one occasion I would have to borrow products from friends for the month or ask my family to send some to me. It is embarrassing as is for a young woman to discuss these things sometimes, but it is a shameful feeling when you're trying to be independent and not rely on others but are in such a desperate situation that you have to ask for such basic items.

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

Fortunately I am in a position where I can afford sanitary products most of the time. I know it would be a comfort to know I could get them in a time of need as my job is not a stable position. I wouldn't expect to claim them regularly as I know these provisions are for those who need it most and I think most will be of the same mind not to abuse it.

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			

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

(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)				X		
(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)			X			

Please explain the reasons for your response

I don't expect a massive decrease in demand for paid sanitary products, as the people who need free products are already not buying them - this just provides those people with basic products. For colleges and universities, they make billions profit every year so surely can afford a small amount to ensure the safety and well-being of their students.

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

Women are being penalized because of their gender - it is a necessary medical items and it is ridiculous we have to pay.

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

Perhaps a heavier focus on the fact this is filling a gap for people who can't afford products not taking customers away from buying products would minimise the negative response from suppliers.

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