

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Claire Shepherd

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**

When one has the worry of how to pay bills in order to keep the gas and electricity on and to buy food, the last

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

thing that is needed is to have the worry of not being able to buy sanitary products. Simply using toilet roll isn't good enough, especially if one has the misfortune of suffering from heavy periods. I know the embarrassment of bleeding through clothes so to worry about that every day of a period must cause so much extra stress. The provision of free sanitary products would relieve what should be an unnecessary stress.

## 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 would be a good idea but it would have to be well publicised - where to get a card and where it can be used as at the moment, I would have no idea how to obtain a c-card.

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

The card should be available only to those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

I don't believe that those who can afford to purchase their own should get free access to products, it would simply be another case of subsidising the middle class, but for those who do need a card, there should be no limit as you can't simply decide how many products will be required over the course of a period, given that they can vary from months to month.

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)?

Pharmacies would probably be the easiest place as GP surgeries and health clinics are already busy without further adding to their burden. Not all area have community centres but most towns have accessible pharmacies.

## 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**

It would lead to fewer young women missing classes by having to stay at home due to lack of sanitary

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)?

products.

## 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

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 am currently in a position where I can afford to buy my own products.

## 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**

GP's surgeries and the NHS, educational establishments and businesses will be able to buy products in bulk and so likely there wouldn't be too much increased cost but the savings made by ordinary individual women

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

will be much greater.

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

One of the ways that money could be allocated to this is by reintroducing charges for prescriptions for all but those in need - such as those who will qualify for free sanitary products - and those who suffer long-term illnesses. There is no need for free medication for one-off prescriptions for those who can afford it.

## 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**

Age: young women on their own may struggle to afford sanitary products and this could affect their ability to attend college/university or work. Disability: Many disabled people are in more reduced circumstances than some able-bodied people so it would ease one burden. Gender reassignment: It maybe less awkward for a trans man who still has female reproductive organs to obtain sanitary products in this way. Pregnancy and maternity: periods are often worse after pregnancy, leading to more products being needed. This can be expensive with a new baby.

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

I cannot think of any negative impact with regards to equality.

## 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?

No

**Please explain the reasons for your response:**

Though perhaps Mooncups or similar alternatives could be offered. Pads/tampons should still be available as they do not suit everybody.

## Page 19: General

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

This is an excellent proposal and should be introduced as soon as possible. It is sad to think this could be defeated by the complaint of people getting something for nothing even when they very much need it.