

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 would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

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?

It's important that women are not disadvantaged by having periods and the implications of this

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'd prefer jus free availability - what's the point in a card? All women menstruate

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.

It's fairly obvious that women need these products. Payment should be discretionary - we are all taxed anyway. Anything else, card, is going to discriminate and potentially be stigmatising. We need to move beyond this.

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)?

Schools
All of the above
Third sector services

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

Access to education is key to equalities

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'm over 50 now but add up what I've spent on sanitary products over my life time - a fortune, others have made profits for years - large companies who don't care about women, equalities or anything but profit. Additionally I've paid VAT. I come from a poor family - we had it bad enough without this on top; sometimes we had no toilet roll, never mind sanitary products. I can't describe how humiliating this is. At University I struggled too - I demonstrated then for VAT free products, to no avail, no-one cared. After my first child was born we relied on benefits and milk tokens; I was studying to be a social worker at this point - poverty impacts most on women, it's a disgrace. We earn less, we're poorer, we often have additional Care responsibilities - for children, for older parents etc. We will receive less pensions, we are subject to gender inequalities - glass ceilings, discrimination, gender pay gap. Why shouldn't there be free sanitary products - it's a National disgrace that we're even talking about this in Scotland in 2017. Society needs to step up and do the right thing. We've been kept back for too long, this is the least we can do for girls and women to support the next and future generations. Anything less is just continued abuse and misuse of power - get on with it!

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 don't have periods now but I strongly believe I've paid enough over the years to have a view - these should be free so that other girls and women shouldn't have the disadvantages that I have.

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

The overall benefits would outweigh the costs and, if not, so what? Women are disadvantaged in so many other ways that this is minimal...companies who provide products will fight back so need to be taken along with

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

us on this journey. After all we've propped up their profits for decades.

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

These big companies could be encouraged to see it as social responsibility - periods should not equal profit. As for VAT that's been an injustice in any case. I'm sure women who can afford to pay will or, let's face it, spend their money on other products which enable companies to profit.

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

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

There needs to be sensible engagement with companies who produce sanitary products - it isn't right that they make profit from this but it is the reality and we need to explore options.

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:

What else can we do - it's the right thing.

Page 19: General

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

There must be green/invironmentally friendly options or research grants to find some?