

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Pamela Fergusson

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?

The vulnerable within society on low income may sacrifice food in order to buy sanitary products. Multiple females may live in a single household which multiplies the outgoing spend on these products further. There is a health and safety issue for those who can not afford these sanitary products, which could lead to possible health issues - higher unnecessary and avoidable stress on the NHS. Children may be bullied for being "unhygienic" when they have no access to these products. This Bill could make an emotional, physical, psychological difference to the lives of many vulnerable families; that is worth everything.

## 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**

Discreet and easy for those who need to use the service but may feel embarrassed about needing to do so.

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 am torn between my answer and this service available to all. I am against means testing, and more in favour of universal services. However, in this situation I think it is more beneficial to be aimed at vulnerable low income families - initially.

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)?

GP surgeries would be more discreet and private. However, pharmacies may be more accessible and easier to get to, especially for families with young children

## 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**

The student population are a good target as they are an appropriate age and usually on a very low income. As a student myself, I sometimes stay in university from 9am-9pm for classes and then self study in the library. This is a long day and if a period comes unexpectedly it would certainly mean having to go home, and being

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unable to study, due to hygiene reasons. Having sanitary products available on campus would make studying easier. Knowing that service was available would prevent panic and make students more relaxed about possible unexpected periods occurring on campus

## 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.**

Being caught out on university campus from an unexpected period and having no sanitary products available

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 would only use this service if I was at university (around 2 hours from my home) and had a period unexpectedly. However, others may use it far more frequently

## 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	

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

products)						
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**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Retailers of sanitary products would still be financially rewarded in return for their products - therefore neutral costs. Government and student facilities would have a slight increase of costs, in order to supply these products. And consumers would have significantly lower costs, due to the financial burden being removed and these products being provided free of charge to the vulnerable within society

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

Bulk buying from retailers in order to obtain a fairer price

## 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**

Currently it is only females who face the dilemma and embarrassment of being "stuck" somewhere (for example university) and getting a period. Perhaps having to leave the area (example university - therefore impacting studies). Women may find it extremely difficult to budget sanitary products into their lives financially, and may have to sacrifice other things - such as food - to afford these products; or go without causing further hygiene and health issues. This is unfair as can disadvantage women. Free sanitary products would eradicate this inequality

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

*No Response*

## 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:**

Sanitary products will be used and disposed of in the same method currently, so there are no environmental issues. Possible economic issues due to the service being provided for free. However it is a justified and

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required service

## Page 19: General

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

Individual differences determine that people may have different cycle lengths and severity; therefore this service should not be capped to a set amount but be unlimited to avoid further embarrassment, and possible avoidance of using the service entirely