

# 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".)

Member of the public

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Partially supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Feel these products should be available at food banks , women's aid and in other crisis situations, possibly at

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

health centres, pharmacies for older women with gynaecological cancers.

## 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**

Seems an easy discreet confidential thing to do but wonder if everyone would be able to understand it and use it

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.**

Most women, whatever their circumstances, manage to provide for themselves by budgeting for these products. They are part of a woman's life. I've been on benefits and had to buy cheaper food and the cheapest of sanitary products and I managed but it would have been a help. Also, for women who are ill. Incontinence pads are provided on the NHS at health centres and sanitary pads should be available also for post menopausal women who experience bleeding due to cancer or other gynaecological conditions. It is ridiculous that pensioners should have to buy these products for health conditions and even told to bring them into hospital because hospitals I have been in no longer provide them as they used to do for all women in all wards. They are no longer available even in gynaecology wards post op and pre op when they are really needed.

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 and health centres, gps

## 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)?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Schools, yes but when a woman has an income of any sort i.e. as a student she should be able to budget and provide for these items. If not, there should be a card system available.

## 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, frequently

**Please explain or give an example of your experience if you feel able to do so.**

After I lost my mother whom I cared for for 20 years and then had to try and find work, I had to do without proper food and or buy the cheapest so that I could buy sanitary towels and I had to buy the cheapest own brand and not necessarily the most useful. Also, having heavy bleeding due to endometrial cancer in my 60s I had to buy many large sized pads while being self employed and on a zero hours contract and I had to provide these for myself in hospital as they no longer supply them. I had to do this pre op for three months and then post op for a number of weeks. I still have to have them on hand in case I have a recurrence of bleeding.

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**

Hopefully I will continue to be well and be able to afford to keep a small stock in case anything happens. If it did, I would be very grateful to be able to access free products via the pharmacy but I may be too embarrassed to do so. Maybe at the Health Centre with a card or voucher would be better. I would not want people to know my business, medical or financial.

## 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:

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

If provided free to everyone this would cost a great deal unless a deal is made with suppliers to get a highly reduced price while not reducing quality. Colleges etc may have to provide leaflets with explanations, dispensers in toilets or a staffed area to collect items. Suppliers would make more money supplying these free items. Retailers would lose money as items would be free and not purchased. Consumers would save a significant amount of money.

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

Only provide to those on low incomes except schoolgirls. Not universal provision unless it is at women's refuges or similar or hospitals.  
Make sure the best deal is done on price and do not allow suppliers to profiteer.

## 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?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Cannot see what it has to do with any of the above except disability if a woman is only on benefits and/or if there is significant period problems associated with illness. Cannot see what gender reassignment has to do with it as menstruation cannot take place. Marriage and partnership makes no difference nor does race or religion as far as I can see.

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

Please do not waste public money giving these items who can well afford to buy them.  
Also, be discreet, not every woman wants others to know her business be it health or financial matters.  
Do not see what this has to do with equality unless it is financial inequality which this does help

## 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?

Unsure

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

Have not read any costings plus if items are available without limit, the system could be abused and those qualifying for free products could over consume and pass them onto others who would normally be expected to

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?

buy them.

## Page 19: General

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

I can understand that economic conditions make this a problem for women but women and other family members used to help each other out with these women's issues.  
Not sure that this should be a men's issue at all.  
Women have always been able to provide for themselves.  
Yes, provide at food banks and doctors, pharmacies for those unemployed, sick, etc  
Do not see why transgender etc would need them!  
It would be cost prohibitive to give them to every woman. Most women can afford them.  
Problem is the good ones can be very expensive.  
Companies should be persuaded to donate large amounts to those who need them and not cost the government anything. After all, these companies make huge profits from women already.  
Please look after older and sick women too. There should not be a charge on being ill in hospital.