

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Maureen Bonner

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

I previously worked in the DWP and know the rates of benefit paid then. However, a person can be disallowed

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

benefit for a variety of reasons, and they are unable to access any other benefit. When I worked in DWP back in 2008, there were a number of other benefits people could claim. However, at the moment disallowed benefit can result with no money at all. So I fully support this Bill. I remember when I was at school I had to bring sanitary towels with me and take the soiled ones back home as there were no provision for disposal. I took my period at age 10 years, while still at primary school. A friend took her first period at age 9.

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

It seems the obvious choice.

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

The card should be available to anyone; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

Please explain the reasons for your response.

If the Scottish Government is serious about free sanitary products, then availability of a card should be unlimited.

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)?

Obviously, in schools, colleges and universities, the location of dispensing free sanitary products would be more suitable in toilets.

For women in general to access the products, then GP surgeries, pharmacies, community centres and health clinics would be ideal.

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

Yes. To ensure that schools, colleges and universities adhere to the Law (when the Bill is published) specific obligations will be met. If not, then action can be taken against the individual school, college or university.

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

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

When I was attending school and college, I only had to ask my Mum to buy me sanitary towels when she was doing her weekly shop. I left college on a Friday, went for an interview for a job in the Civil Service the following Monday, got the job and started work the next week, so I had my wage to keep my going. I was very fortunate in always having the money to buy sanitary towels. However, things have changed since then and women are not so fortunate.

Q7. If sanitary products were available for free, which of the following would apply to you?

Not applicable: I do not need or use sanitary products

Please explain the reasons for your response

As I am 68 and my period stopped at age 50, starting at age 10, I do not need sanitary products (thank God). When my periods finally stopped, it was the best day of my life. When I was menstrating, I had hellish cramps and had to take paracetamol for the first two days so that I could function normally. At the end, my periods went a bit irregular then stopped altogether. Hurrah!!

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

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

I would expect the Government to take the full cost of supplying free sanitary products and colleges, businesses and individuals would be given them free.

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

Obviously, the cost would have to be met by the Government and they could ask the manufacturers of these products if there was any way in which to reduce costs by obtaining the necessary ingredients at cost 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

No need for an explanation

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

By stating that if men were to have periods, then the situation would not arise. Women have had to fight for everything, even the vote, so it is time to get a grip!!

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:

I am sure that men (not being sexist) will try and give some reasons for not delivering the Bill, but I am sure that any criticism can be overcome.

Page 19: General

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

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No. I have read all the notes on the proposed Bill and cannot find anything to add. Monica, I wish you all the best and look forward to reading that the Bill has been passed.