

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Morven Larkin

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

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

I feel that period poverty needs to be tackled but the Scottish Government should also be considering environmental implications of encouraging the use of disposable sanitary products. I understand that menstrual cups may not be suitable for everyone but disposable pads could be used as an alternative. Much like the "baby box" I think that women should be able to apply for a menstrual cup or set(s) of reusable pads. These could be replaceable after a given period of time. Therefore environmentally friendly products can be provided free of charge and if people want plastic products they can purchase these at the current cost. More women need to be educated in the use of reusable products but also provision of sinks in educational establishments needs to be improved so that girls and women can clean up privately. The long term cost of reusable menstrual products would be less. There is still a case for emergency towels and tampons to be provided in schools and workplaces.

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

Only in "emergency" type situations or have a limited number per person as I feel that the use of disposable items should be discouraged.

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

The card should be available to anyone; its use should be restricted (e.g. by limiting the number of products that may be claimed each month)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

See previous answer. I don't think it should be means tested.

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, workplaces.

Menstruating only becomes medical when something goes wrong. I can't imagine going to the GP surgery for free sanitary products. Where would Young people go? To a trusted adult.

Perhaps the card could have a pin system and it would operate a larger type vending machine in supermarkets / stores such as superdrug and boots. I would want to go to the places where sanitary products are currently available.

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)?

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Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response

See previous comments re emergency vs educating on reusable 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 expect to claim free products occasionally

Please explain the reasons for your response

I would appreciate one menstrual cup every 5 years or set of washable pads annually. I think claiming sanitary products will end up being complicated and therefore easier for women to carry on as they have been doing.

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

Initial implementation would cost more but long term the cost for everyone should come down. I foresee that Free sanitary products will be much like free prescriptions in Scotland.

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

See aforementioned introduction of reusable products.

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?

Slightly positive

Please explain the reasons for your response

See previous answers.

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

C card type machines.
Availability to all.
Reusable products being posted out.

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:

See suggestions re menstrual cups etc.

Page 19: General

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

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Nothing further to add at the moment