

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Lorna Finlayson

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

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

It is unacceptable that some people in Scotland are not able to access the sanitary products they need and often face a choice between feeding themselves, or their families. The Tory cuts to welfare have pushed more people into poverty and hardship, many of who have to rely on foodbanks. The pressure on families and these vital services is severe, and I believe strongly that the Scottish Government needs to step in and help those in need by making sanitary products freely available in schools, colleges, workplaces and other public buildings and services.

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

Yes this would allow people to access what they need free from stigma.

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.

It is important that barriers to access are taken down to allow those in need to access sanitary products, by making the card available to anyone it will reduce the stigma of a means tested system.

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, health clinics, GP surgeries, colleges, universities, community centres

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

Without specific obligations there is no guarantee that institutions will provide sanitary products and some people will not get the help they need.

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.

Yes, when I was a student.

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 am in the very lucky position that I am now able to afford the sanitary products I need, but I know this is not the case for many people.

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

It is difficult to make a full assessment of the cost without knowing what the uptake would be but as far as I know the free condom scheme has not been a hugely expensive scheme and has reduced costs in the NHS. I believe that NHS costs could be reduced because the number of people requiring medical treatment could fall as a result of the scheme.

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

Work with the main suppliers of products to ensure that costs are kept down.

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

It will have a positive impact on women and trans people who need to access these products.

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

Effective monitoring of the impact of the scheme.

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:

Yes, the condom scheme has been a success and there will be best practice that can be drawn from and applied for this scheme.

Page 19: General

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

I fully support this Bill and look forward to the Scottish Government's response on the issue.