

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Fully Supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response

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

This has been lacking for so long. Women are disadvantaged because of their biology, not because of choice. As noted, condoms have been available free of charge for years. While I fully agree with this policy, having sex is a choice, having a period is not.

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

There must be some kind of control otherwise there will be no regard for the value of the product (people will take more than they need, younger people will 'play' with them - waste. The control should be loose though - products must be easy to obtain, especially for individuals who are nervous or embarrassed about asking.

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.

Having a period is not a choice. Women should have access to free (unbranded) products. If they have a preference for a branded product they can buy it. How do you decide how many products someone can have? Everyone's body is different. There is always an in-between group of people - income is not low enough to claim benefits but not high enough to be able to afford some essentials without worrying. Need a card scheme or similar to discourage waste.

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)?

All of the above, plus schools, colleges etc. as mentioned in the bill.

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

Definitely schools. Many children are shy / embarrassed / hesitant to ask staff for things in general (especially scary office ladies). By the time people get to college / university many will have become more confident in general and accept that periods are an unavoidable fact of life.

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)

Not applicable: I do not need or use sanitary products

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

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 depends on where the money comes from to pay for the scheme. If this is financed by central government there should be minimal cost to local authorities, colleges etc. I imagine that many women will stick with their preferred brand, and not request free unbranded products unless they need to. Girls in school may tend to use the free products if they are more readily available to them (like the free toothpaste at school).

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

No Response

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

Will reduce the need for females to take time off study / work due to not having products. Will make periods in general a bit more normal - hopefully girls won't feel so embarrassed if they can get products from a machine in school rather than having to ask or buy in a shop.

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:

Yes, if it's not over administered.

Page 19: General

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

No Response