

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

I believe that disadvantaging people as a result of a biological function is morally wrong. Whilst the link may not be immediately obvious - allowing this disadvantage is effectively discrimination.

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

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.

Universal access is an important aspect of this proposal, in order to make it morally justifiable, but "unlimited access" could present significant cost implications. There is also a risk that objectors to this scheme would try to create fear of an unlimited bill to the tax-payer if no limits are set at all. The limit on the number of products available should be carefully set such that it could not negatively impact on anyone: the limit must not disadvantage anyone. I suspect that such a card based system would already have a (social) limiting effect because many people would attach a stigma to 'not being able to afford' sanitary products for themselves and others would assume (and be told by advertisers) that any products available universally are less good and less desirable than products which are paid for directly by users.

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)?

I would agree with all of the above outlets (especially the use of pharmacies which would reduce the potential stigma attached to using the scheme).

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

The distribution of sanitary products in Schools would need careful consideration, though, as both a degree of anonymity and an offer of support would need to be maintained. This would especially apply to Primary Schools. Collecting sanitary products from dispensers might not be as easy as people envisage - most Secondary Schools would struggle to ensure that paper towels and soap are readily available in toilets. Lining up at the school office behind someone who was collecting a bus pass to collect sanitary products might not be

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ideal. A worst case scenario did occur to me in terms of guidance teachers handing out sanitary products regularly in PSE lessons - but maybe a more open and obvious acknowledgement of this part of human experience would be a good thing? Ultimately any school based system would have to carefully avoid the potential for gender bias or for gender based bullying.

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

I don't believe that universal access to "free" sanitary products (paid for by the government) would automatically equate to every person who uses sanitary products (a) using the service and (b) refusing to pay for branded / advertised products.

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

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?

Unsure

Page 19: General

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

No Response