

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Margaret Allan

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?

Sanitary protection goods are not luxury items but are essential items for all people who menstruate. Having access to sanitary protection should not depend on a person's ability to pay for it and should therefore be freely available to all who require it.

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?

No

Please explain the reasons for your response

I don't understand how the c-card system works but I am aware of the many people in this country who have difficulty paying for sanitary goods ; homeless people, people on low incomes and zero hour contracts, students burdened by debt, the unemployed, women and girls economically dependent on others. A system which gives easy access to all who require sanitary protection is essential.

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.

Sanitary protection should be available to all who menstruate-this is not a choice but a requirement. A realistic number of products should be available each month for all who require sanitary protection.

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)?

Pharmacies within easy reach for all and the place where most people are likely to purchase sanitary protection.

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

Schools, colleges and universities should take a holistic view of their students; supporting their physical, mental and educational needs and development.

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.

Being a mother of four children dependent on one salary, sanitary products are not cheap and therefore providing sanitary protection for myself and two young daughters could be very difficult on a monthly basis.

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

I am past the stage of menstruation but I am happy to have the opportunity to speak for those who do menstruate regularly.

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

As the proposed bill is about the health and well being of all in this country who regularly menstruate - this bill should be viewed as essential in providing equality to women.

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

I presume sanitary goods are not now taxed!

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

The basic protection needs of those who menstruate will be available to all regardless of their financial position.

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

I cannot envisage any negative impact, only positive impact.

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?

No

Please explain the reasons for your response:

The bill would enable all who menstruate regularly to have improved health and well being; allowing for improved attendance in educational institutions and improved employment opportunities.

Page 19: General

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

This bill is long overdue and speaking as an older woman who has passed the stage of menstruation, I am delighted that this particular inequality is being addressed for present and future generations.