

Proposed Sanitary Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Chloe Whyte, MSYP

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?

There are too many constituents in my area attending school without proper menstrual hygiene products, or missing school entirely due to lack of towels or tampons. For teenagers living in deprivation, it is even more important that they attend school and gain the qualifications they need to become employed. This cannot happen whilst the so-called 'tampon tax' exists, and menstrual hygiene products are so expensive.

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

Whilst it may feel embarrassing for some people, using the card would ensure efficient distribution of the products and leaves little room for people to exploit it.

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.

Whilst this does mean that some people who can afford to pay for menstrual hygiene products would be taking advantage of the system, many people living in deprivation are either not claiming, or not eligible for, benefits. To restrict the number of people receiving the card in this way could mean leaving some menstruators back at square one.

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, as this is where people currently go to buy menstrual hygiene products and so wouldn't create much of a difference in people's lives.

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

For many people, their period can come as a surprise. They may not realise they are due until a very unopportune moment (i.e in a classroom). Pupils can't exactly nip to their nearest pharmacy or GP during

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)?

school hours, and so these products need to be readily available for them when these moments happen.

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.

Due to numerous health conditions my experience with periods has been very unpredictable and turbulent; I am left wondering when it will start and how bad it could get every month. I have often been caught in situations where I haven't been able to leave the house for a day because there are no supplies to use and I cannot buy more. I depend on my Mum, who works full time, during these moments and so usually have to wait until she is back and able to buy towels for me.

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

My family receive certain benefits that I feel would make me eligible for free sanitary products, and I also would expect most young people to be given the ability to claim free products occasionally.

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				

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)			X			
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Please explain the reasons for your response

Universities and colleges should definitely not increase their prices when students are already worse off.

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

I'm not sure.

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

Increasing the range of people who can access sanitary products through distributing them to different places and lowering the price.

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

Consult young people on how strict the regulations surrounding the card scheme should be, in order to avoid discouraging them from taking this opportunity.

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:

There are plenty of ways to create more environmentally friendly sanitary products.

Page 19: General

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

N/A