

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Dr Kenneth Brown

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 absurd that stigma and taboo about this entirely natural function should expose women to embarrassment, discomfort and even physical danger as a result of a consequent under-provision of sanitary products in public places. This issue merits much wider awareness by the public and their political representatives.

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?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response

We are surely wealthy enough, as a society, to simply provide these products free of charge to all those who need them. Although the idea of a card has some merit, it probably should not be the only solution because there would always be those who lose, mislay or forget their card.

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view in relation to a card-based system?

There is no need for a card scheme

Please explain the reasons for your response.

As suggested in the previous answer, universal free provision will hardly bankrupt the UK! The other methods itemised above would all tend to stigmatise women on low incomes and discourage the kind of openness about this subject that is so necessary.

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 the above, schools, colleges, universities, job centres and supermarkets - and also all public toilets where staff are available to prevent vandalism by idiots.

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

As previously explained

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

Please explain or give an example of your experience if you feel able to do so.

I'm male

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

As already indicated

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

The issue of production costs is technical but it seems unlikely that they could be very high and certainly not unaffordable for a civilised society. Widespread provision of these products might bring costs in chemists and supermarkets down unless a very disadvantageous contract is concluded between government and businesses.

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

As previously suggested

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

Simply by removing stigma about menstruation and removing obstacles for people with various disadvantages

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

By ensuring universal provision without qualifications for those who use the service.

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:

Its effects would be minimal compared to so many other areas of public expenditure

Page 19: General

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

No - but good luck with this proposal