

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Paul Bentley

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

The menstruating population should not need to pay for sanitary products.

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

I do think there needs to be a way to ensure a universal free sanitary products scheme is not abused. If there are no controls at all, criminals will be using our public resources to make money selling these free products to other people and other countries. I don't have sufficient knowledge or experience of the c-card scheme to know if this is an effective method for sanitary product distribution.

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.

Comments as per question 2.

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)?

Supermarkets, pharmacies, GP surgeries, community centres, health clinics, schools, colleges, universities.

It should be possible to involve supermarkets in the distribution if a purchasing contract is set up at least with all the major companies (Lidl, Aldi, Tesco, Asda, etc.). This may help to reduce distribution costs as there would be less need to transport the products as well as provide wide and easy access to 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

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	

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

Compare the cost of using non-branded products with using a single branded product (sanitary towels and tampons from one manufacturer). It may be that a single manufacturer would give a significant bulk purchase discount if their name is associated with the scheme. Alternatively, it may be more cost effective to use non-branded products. A centrally agreed procurement contract with nationwide prices should be set up by the Scottish government to avoid different regions having to set up and negotiate separate deals and possibly pay different rates. Some transportation companies may be willing to transport products for free or for a low cost to remote locations/islands if they get free advertising.

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?

In my opinion the only negative impact is if criminals are able to steal large quantities of free products and sell them on for a profit. Using a c-card scheme presumably has a potentially significant cost impact to maintain whereas uncontrolled free issue would not. However uncontrolled free issue will unfortunately lead to criminal activity. To minimise that, perhaps the c-card scheme (or similar controlled distribution) is necessary.

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:

From an environmental aspect, would it make sense and be cost effective to distribute the free products with suitable biodegradable bags? This may encourage the products to be disposed of in general waste rather than being flushed down the toilet as frequently happens, causing blockages in sewer systems?

Page 19: General

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

No Response