

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".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Partially supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response

I think sanitary products should be tax free

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

Why complicate matters. Some women / girls will have a preference re: the sanitary products that they use and there is a huge variety. By making sanitary products tax free then it reduces the cost as they are an essential item.

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

The card should be available only to those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits; 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.

It is similar to free prescriptions and bus travel e.g. many people would be willing to contribute something to sustain public service provision and so on. How many cards do people need... issuing a card is potentially a stigma for low income recipients. There should be discrete ways for females to access free sanitary products as there are with condoms for instance.

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)?

By providing examples here this is arguably a leading question but each of those: GP surgeries, pharmacies, community centres, health clinics all obviously make sense however, heavily subsidising dispensing machines in public toilets including at shopping centres and such like could also be a potential idea.

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)?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response

Depends on cost... *** it is evident that people will always have strong views on the issue as it is something everyone can talk about. Our pupils now accept that we all have a responsibility to use our facilities respectfully but there is a wider context here whereby schemes such as 'Flushed for Success' meant that young people did not see the improvements they had hoped for in school toilet provision. In terms of transgender individuals for example, where establishments have gender specific toilets then dispensers would in effect need to be allocated in all facilities. I would welcome school toilets being upgraded across Scotland so that they are clean, fresh, welcoming and truly accessible so that Pupil Councils can focus on what we really are here for - learning.

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)

I prefer not to say

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

Have opted for 'prefer not to say' here as undoubtedly sanitary products back in my student days and such like were an added extra that a female has to consider whereas a male does not. The way I view this however, is not dissimilar to the fact that one of my siblings requires to wear contact lenses whereas I do not. She has to pay for that every month which is a similar kind of circumstance.

Q7. If sanitary products were available for free, which of the following would apply to you?

I would not expect to claim free products

Please explain the reasons for your response

I am accepting of having to purchase my own items as this to receive them for free would possibly restrict my preferred brands etc.

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

There is no mention of schools above but there is earlier on in the survey. Lack of profit to businesses.

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

Making products tax-free. Would be interested to know why that is not an option. As an approach I think it would show a willingness by society to recognise this matter whilst easing the financial cost.

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

Helps to breakdown stereotypes. For example, in my professional role I tend to tuck my sanitary product into my clothing to be discrete. I admire a colleague who openly carried the item to the toilet with her.

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

*** School have a successful 'Challenge to Change' initiative which has highlighted equality and providing we keep reiterating it then society will evolve through time. I do think that as a female head I have had specific challenges that male predecessors would not have encountered and to an extent I see this with my professional peers.

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

Please explain the reasons for your response:

More sustainable options would undoubtedly be welcomed by women/girls.

Page 19: General

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

Having gone through my teenage years, twenties and now most of my thirties, I commend the fact that this issue is at least being aired with view to being addressed.