

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Fully Supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

I fully support any initiative to offer free sanitary provision for women - only point is that I feel this should be free to all women, but this is a good start!

## 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**

not sure about this - they need to be as accessible as possible - maybe this is a 'shame' type provision, similar to free school meals - that carries some stigma - could you just not have free machines available?

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

The card should be available to anyone; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

you do not want to 'means test' peoples access - just because you work and have an income, does not mean you don't live in poverty. There are also many women who appear to live in more affluent households, but could be facing domestic abuse, financial abuse etc. and they also should have this access

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)?

as many outlets as possible - need to think about opening hours of these places suggested - I have a real issues with local authorities charging the public for the use of public toilets - this impacts on women who need access to these facilities - there should be free sanitary provision available in a free public toilet, open 24 hrs per day in most towns and cities

## 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**

yes, but again would like to see this expanded to work places etc.

## 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.**

I now have 2 teenage daughters - so am buying for 3 women in my home. Both my husband and I work and appear to be ok' financially - we own our home, etc. However near payday I can be short and have often faced the choice of buying sanitary provision, or milk and bread for the family

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**

this is tricky - but I believe in universal benefits as I think the message behind this support all women, no matter of affordability - once you start saying 'those who can afford, should pay' defeats the strong message that women should be entitled to this free provision as a basic right - we need to be confident and say we all deserve this as women so it does not become a 2 tier system, that carries stigma etc. Big companies should not be making profit from any women, so the more the message is that this is a fundamental right, the better.

## 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						
(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)		X				
(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)					X	

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

not sure I entirely understand who the funding would come from, so difficult to say. I would like to see supermarkets offer free products, just like Tesco has been offering 'free fruit' for children in their stores

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

lobbying big businesses - this wont be easy!

## 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**

this message is so important on equality- we value all women and girls - this has to be seen as a right not a privilege

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

business will be worried about profit - but the discourse needs to change and we need to question why women should be disadvantaged because biologically they have this need? It will be a tough storm to ride - but a worthy cause

## 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

## Page 19: General

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

I thank Monica Lennon for this Bill - good luck - I hope it gets cross party support and support from wider communities - its a start to offering free sanitary provision to all women