

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Lisa-Marie Ferla

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**

Period poverty is an affront to women's dignity. No woman should ever be forced to go without menstrual products due to poverty.

## 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 don't know how the c-card system works, but bearing in mind that homeless women and younger women are among the people who will benefit most from the legislation we have to bear in mind that people may be transient, without addresses to register for cards - or simply living the sort of chaotic lives that means keeping a card on their person is impossible. I feel that whatever model is ultimately adopted has to make it as easy as possible for those in need to access products when they need them. To be honest, I'd favour no registration/restrictions at all - just walk in, ask for what you need and get it. But I understand that, for budget reasons, parliament may require you to put limits on the right.

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.**

I don't think we should have to ask people to jump through hoops to obtain a card, for the reasons described in my previous answer. I assume the products available won't be premium/brand-name products anyway, so I trust women not to abuse the scheme.

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)?

They have to be accessible, non-judgemental and come with a wide range of opening hours. For this reason, I think community pharmacies are probably the best bet.

## 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**

The same as my previous reasoning: because period poverty is an affront to women's dignity. Schools,

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)?

colleges and universities should be under separate obligations because of the huge concerns, supported by the research, that period poverty is interfering with the education of young women. I don't think the costs to these institutions outweigh the benefits, again presuming that non-branded products are offered to those who need them.

## 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)

No

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
<b>(a) Government and the public sector (e.g. local authorities, the NHS)</b>		X				
<b>(b) Colleges and universities</b>		X				
<b>(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)</b>		X				
<b>(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)</b>				X		

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

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

By partnering with brands for whom it would be excellent PR to be involved in this initiative, and by purchasing the most cost effective products for distribution.

## 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**

Will reduce stress and affordability constraints for women and other people with uteruses, making it easier for them to contribute to society on an equal footing.

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

I don't think there are any negative impacts on equality.

## 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:**

I don't think the costs would be overly burdensome, and the benefits far outweigh the costs.

## Page 19: General

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

*No Response*