

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".)

Student (at school, college or university)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Erin Slaven

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

I am only surprised a bill of this nature hasn't been proposed sooner. Period poverty is a very real problem for so many women. Sanitary products are a necessity for any individual with a menstrual cycle but the price of these products mean they are not always accessible to women and girls from all classes and backgrounds.

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?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response

Yes! I think the C-Card system for condoms has been a success. It seems only natural that this would also benefit women as they can't choose to not have a period - for many it is a certainty. If this has worked for free condoms for intercourse, which people choose to participate in, I don't see why it shouldn't be wholly functional for females expecting a period too.

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 think the cards should be available for everyone. It is undeniable that people on low income are most affected by period poverty. I truly hope that if this Bill goes forward that we can make real change. However, I think basing provision on how low an income somebody has poses some challenges. Somebody's bank details don't always reflect how much disposable income they have, and people's flows and cycles vary from person to person - so some people will pay a lot more for sanitary products from month to month - even if they have an income that is seen as above 'low'. The more accessible the better, for everyone! Sanitary products are a human right.

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)?

I would say all of the above seem viable options. However, in terms of accessibility, perhaps pharmacies. There are more of these on most given high streets than any other so easier for people to access who can't perhaps afford travel costs to go to GP surgeries, health clinics etc.

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)?

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Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response

Yes. All places of learning should provide these products for free so to minimise discomfort and distraction from 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)

Yes, occasionally

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

I would utilise this service. Periods can be unpredictable and under this financial climate, expensive. I am a student and spending considerable money on products for a bodily behaviour I can't stop can be hard pushed at certain times of the month.

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			

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

products)						
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Please explain the reasons for your response

I think organisations would inevitably have a small cost increase. However, I think other provisions could be considered perhaps through donations to organisations and workplaces? I think a cost increase in organisations is a small price to pay for a fully comfortable and healthy workforce.

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

No Response

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

Huge positive impact. I think access to period products is hugely underestimated. People who are disabled can't always easily make it to a stockist to purchase products. People from different classes may have different means with which to afford sanitary products. People who identify as a different gender from the one associated with the sex they were born may find purchasing sanitary products uncomfortable. People may be in difficult relationship circumstances where period products are held and limited as a form of control, and money may even be kept from them. This Bill would offer discretion and comfort for all women who find acquiring sanitary products less than simple.

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

No Response

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 think it can be delivered sustainably. Socially, it is invaluable and would promise that all women have the

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?

same, equal access to sanitary products as and when they need them. Environmentally, it may be worthwhile to explore environmentally-friendly options. Perhaps sanitary products which are biodegradable/recyclable.

Page 19: General

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

I am elated this Bill is being debated. Even if it is not successful, it has raised awareness of a very important issue in Scotland and beyond. Keep up the good work Monica!