

# 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".)

Politician (MSP/MP/peer/MEP/Councillor)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Joe Cullinane

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**

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

Sanitary products are a basic human. Woman don't choose to have periods nor does a period wait to assess what that woman has in her purse or pocket. Measures to make sanitary products universally available, free of charge would be a progressive step forward for us a country and society.

## 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**

It works for condoms so I am sure it could work for sanitary products. There may be other ways to deliver universal provision however and it would be worthwhile analysing a range of options to assess what delivers best for woman and the life's that they lead.

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

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)?

In North Ayrshire our Council administration have already installed machines in our secondary school toilets to provide free sanitary products. We would like to explore rolling that out to leisure facilities and other publicly owned buildings in the area. I believe the public sector, through Community Planning Partnerships, could deliver a holistic approach which allows sanitary products to be available across a whole range of facilities in our communities.

## 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**

In North Ayrshire we are already doing it in our secondary school toilets via free vending machines. Our local college provide sanitary products but they are provided via the Student Association so I think the key to any legal obligation on schools, colleges and universities is how they make the products available - having students donating the items should not meet the obligation nor should it be allowed that woman have to physically request access to the products, instead it should be done discreetly and in confidence like our scheme in secondary schools.

## 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	

### Please explain the reasons for your response

The cost of delivering our period poverty scheme in secondary schools has been minimal. For 9 secondary schools it has cost £11,000 meaning that our decision, which we implemented within weeks of taking, has been implemented within existing resources. Based on this I would expect there to be additional costs on those who deliver the scheme but they costs would be marginal in my opinion. However, I do believe, given the impact of austerity on local government and the NHS, that any national scheme which is introduced by the Scottish Parliament should be fully funded by the Scottish Government. Local authorities make decisions based on local priorities which impact on our budget, like we did with our period poverty scheme. However, should the Parliament, or Government, wish to introduce policies based on their own priorities then they should fund those. That I believe is an important principle. In terms of individuals, universal provision would reduce their costs. Only where any universal provision does not provide an individuals preferred choice of product should they have to pay in that universal system (although any universal system should embed individual choice within it). Most importantly, what free provision will do is remove any stigma for those who cannot afford these essential products.

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

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

## Page 19: General

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

*No Response*