

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Mairi Hamilton

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?

I have read the full consultation and I completely support the introduction of the proposed bill. Period poverty is a health issue and a gendered issue. It would be fantastic for the Scottish Parliament to implement the proposed changes. It will help to undermine the stigma attached to periods and the inconvenience that they routinely bring to women's lives. Women and girls should not have to jeopardise their education, wages, job security or success because of their inability to access these crucial products. It damages their relationship with their bodies and undermines their dignity as human beings. This is not a position they should be in and MSPs are in a position to do something about it and enact really positive change. I am proud of the welfare provisions within Scotland (i.e. free prescriptions, free dentist appointments etc) and free, widespread access to period products could be another example of Scotland's ethos of care and provision.

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 seems simple and effective. Easily obtained and straightforward.

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.

Access to all women! All women menstruate. Basing access to the card on the receipt of benefits or any other basis risks making some women ineligible when they really need it.

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)?

All of the above. Plus newsagents, supermarkets 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)?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response

Proposals set out in the consultation are extremely convincing, highlighting the clear benefits to doing so.

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 remember being at school and getting my period unexpectedly. I didn't have a pad and felt too embarrassed to ask anybody for help and I just let myself bleed the whole day. It was uncomfortable and distracting and I felt ashamed. Girls should be able to go somewhere in school where they can access the items they need when this happens.

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 use products as and when I need them as provided by my university. I would continue to purchase my own products for regular use as I am fortunate enough to be able to afford to do so.

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

Government would need to pay for the scheme but savings to NHS. Colleges and universities would have to pay to provide products. Businesses would surely be better off with more staff at work rather than taking time off due to their period. Individuals' use of the card would save certain people a lot of money from buying

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

products which were a significant proportion of their limited income.

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

I don't know

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

It would be a very positive change for women. Parliament would be showing their support for women and their willingness to confront issues affecting women's lives. I think it would encourage women to have a better relationship with menstruation and their bodies.

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