

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Mrs C Clark University of Glasgow

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?

While a younger student I suffered financial difficulty where by I had to choose between buying food or sanitary products. Men do not need to suffer this cost, hence in a drive for equality and fairness, as well as maintaining basic hygiene, there should be a way that women can access free sanitary products if required. I feel that all schools should provide free sanitary products to girls to avoid the risk of Toxic Shock Syndrome, so that less well off young girls are not tempted try to save money by wearing products for longer. Sometimes young girls do not have access to fresh sanitary wear at home and need provision via another route. It's a basic need that should be free through schools, universities and GPs.

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?

No

Please explain the reasons for your response

This is unfair on school children. Free access via school without shaming is vital. Perhaps ALL school age girls over the age of eight could be given vouchers to use to buy sanitary wear. I am sure supermarkets would support the scheme.

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

The card should be available to anyone; its use should be restricted (e.g. by limiting the number of products that may be claimed each month)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The cost of working out who is on benefits and admin is a waste of money. Spend this money on sanitary wear and thus on creating equality. Not everyone will use the service as they will have preferred products or feel that they have enough money to not burden the service. Hence only those who need it will use it. To keep the scheme financially viable and to prevent abuse there would need to be a limit. However a GP should be able to prescribe additional products, if for medical reasons (menorrhagia), more are required.

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)?

schools, universities, colleges and GPs as well as other NHS centres

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

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)?

Please explain the reasons for your response

I have noticed over the last 10 years the provision in toilets has become non-existent in many public places. I would like to see guidelines for public sector buildings. However I worry that if we it were a legal requirement we may lose public toilets due to increased running costs.

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.

When younger as a student I struggled to afford sanitary wear. It is a horrible choice for anyone... hygiene or food?

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

I am past the age of menstruation.

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 | | | |

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

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| (d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products) | | | | | X | |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|

Please explain the reasons for your response

I would rather pay an increase in income tax to create equality between genders and to save young girls from suffering due to poverty or lack of access to sanitary products.

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

Increase income tax. Punish financial agents who help wealthy people avoid tax with serious prison sentences. We can afford all of these changes if we change the law to stop the rich stealing our taxes. It's not a loophole, it's fraud!

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's unfair that woman have to face this life long additional financial burden. They cannot choose to stop having periods.

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

Get on top of taxation.

Provide grants to help schools, and higher education meet initial provision costs.

Run scheme though GPs would minimise running costs.

Provide information to employers on guidelines.

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

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Please explain the reasons for your response:

In the longer term it will improve hygiene and hence less woman will need NHS treatment for toxic shock and vaginosis. It will reduce stigma and allow more women to talk about menstruation and associated health risks which will in turn have health benefits. Woman will feel more able to discuss environmental issues about disposal which will protect the environment and save the government millions in sewage costs to unblocking drains. Over a 10 year period the initial costs will result in savings as woman are able to feel that menstruation, and how they deal with it, is a normal part of life that can be discussed in constructive ways.

Page 19: General

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

Please give girls the chance to feel that menstruation is a healthy part of being a woman.