

Proposed Sanitary Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Edinburgh University Students' Association

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

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

Edinburgh University Students' Association's Advice Place takes part in the C-card system for free condoms. This is simple for students to access, initial sign up is anonymous and quick, and students can use any C-card point across the city. We believe that a similar system to this for sanitary products, which provides anonymous, simple and quick access, would work well. We understand that by providing users with a card and number, it makes it possible to collate useful data, but this should never be a barrier to accessing the card.

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.

There should be no age limit or gender criteria for a card and no restriction on the number of products that could be accessed. Everyone's needs are different. We would not support restricting use of the card to those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits. Means testing students would be difficult and could prevent them from accessing the scheme. There could also be stigma associated with low income which could deter those who need it most from accessing 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)?

We think that locations that are already C-card points would be suitable for dispensing the products. Students' Associations' advice centres are well placed to provide these products to students. Edinburgh University Students' Association's Advice Place currently provides free sanitary products to those who need them.

It would be important that not all dispensing locations were venues associated with health clinics and doctors, but that some were in other community venues. Dispensing locations should be places where people from all cultures feel comfortable accessing. Some international students do not always know that they can access doctors in the UK and might not know that they could access the scheme if it was linked to a health centre.

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

We would support obligations on schools, colleges and universities to make sanitary products available for free to their members. This should be alongside and not instead of a government funded universal C-card type scheme. Difficulty in accessing sanitary products must not be a barrier to people accessing education.

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)?

Edinburgh University Students' Association's Student Council passed policy in March 2017 to lobby the University of Edinburgh to provide free sanitary products in toilets. People of all genders may have a need for sanitary products. All genders should have access to them in appropriate locations, which could mean providing products in male toilets as well as female and gender neutral toilets.

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 Response

Q7. If sanitary products were available for free, which of the following would apply to you?

No Response

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:

No Response

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?

Any scheme to provide free sanitary products must be accessible to people of all genders.

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:

Providing mooncups as an alternative to more traditional types of sanitary products could contribute to the sustainability of the scheme, as well as sourcing products from companies who make eco-friendly products. The Scottish Government would have the potential to make a positive impact on sustainability by encouraging people to make more eco-friendly choices through the scheme.

Page 19: General

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

No Response