

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Lanarkshire Carers Centre

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

Lanarkshire Carers Centre provide support to un-paid carers across Lanarkshire to access information and a range of direct support services. We place carers at the heart of our organisation to ensure the services we offer are effective and accessible, regardless of personal circumstances or caring situations. We believe that poverty is not inevitable and that evidence suggests that the stigmatisation of people in receipt of benefits has negative impacts on their well-being and may reduce many benefits going unclaimed and that stigma is directly contributing to high levels of poverty in the UK. Research shows pads and tampons cost women around £13 every month and at Lanarkshire Carers Centre we are under no illusion that many unpaid carers are likely to already be living in poverty. Information from the 2011 UK Census also show that more women than men are likely to be unpaid carers.

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

A card based system similar to how the C-card system works would be an effective and discreet way to provide sanitary products for those that need them without the fear of embarrassment and stigma.

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.

The current c-card is available to anyone living, working or studying in Lanarkshire regardless of income level and does not limit the amount of times a card holder can use the card in any given month. We believe that the card based system should be free to access at the point of need and without restrictions on the number of times it can be used in any given month as the recent research released to mark 2017 World Menstrual Hygiene Day revealed that one in four women in the UK, aged between 16 and 39, don't understand their menstrual cycle. This accompanies the fact that many women are embarrassed to discuss their periods which then places the idea of a taboo, shame and secrecy.

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)?

- GP surgeries, pharmacies, community centres, health clinics

Lanarkshire Carers Centre would also be willing to act as a dispensing point for all unpaid carers who are registered with us in a similar way to how we provide free access to condoms.

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 believe that all schools, colleges and universities should make sanitary products available for free for all girls and women.

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

- We expect that any and all costs of providing free sanitary products can and should be met by the Scottish Government. Access to sanitary products is a necessity as no-one chooses to menstruate, and those who are struggling financially should not be penalised when looking after their essential health. Women should never be

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

forced into a situation where they need to make a choice between sanitary provision and other basic needs.

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

- By choosing to source products for lower and varying prices when purchasing them in bulk or choosing non-branded items

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