

We need action on period poverty now

Today the Scottish Government is launching a pilot scheme in Aberdeen providing free sanitary products to women and girls on lower incomes.

I'm pleased the campaign I have started as an opposition MSP has pushed SNP Ministers to act, but the reality is that women and girls urgently need national action now.

A pilot scheme is a welcome step in the right direction, but we must go much further to help women and girls across the country who are facing a monthly struggle to access the products they need.

After relentless austerity over the last few years from both the Tories and the SNP, there are too many women and girls in Scotland who are unable to afford essential sanitary products during menstruation due to poverty.

Yet there's no reason why any woman or girl, in a wealthy country like Scotland in 2017, should be unable to access these vital products which are essential to their health and wellbeing.

We need to end period poverty and improve access to sanitary products right across Scotland and that's why I will soon be launching a consultation on a Members Bill proposal which will give all women in Scotland the right to access these products for free, regardless of their income.

During my campaign I've been inspired to meet so many committed activists who are championing the issue of access to sanitary products in their own professions, classrooms and communities.

I hope as many people as possible will take part in my consultation and that SNP Ministers will embrace my ambition to make Scotland an example to the world on menstrual health.