

## Local Government and Communities Committee

### Call for Views on the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill

#### Submission from RCN Scotland

#### Introduction

and trade union for nursing staff, with members in the NHS, independent and third sectors. RCN Scotland promotes patient and nursing interests by campaigning on issues that affect members, shaping national health policies, representing members on practice and employment issues and development opportunities. With around 40,000 members in Scotland, the RCN is the voice of nursing.

As nurses we are well placed to make a real difference on the issue of period poverty. Whatever setting nursing staff work in, they will undoubtedly come into contact with people who are menstruating and for whom this may be causing knock-on physical, social or mental effects. RCN Scotland Forum is currently developing a resource to support all nursing staff to have really open, fruitful conversations about periods with the people in their care, in order to tackle stigma and encourage people to seek help if they are experiencing pain, discomfort or embarrassment when menstruating.

RCN Scotland has also been working to facilitate more open discussions around period poverty. A recent event, which was recently held, in partnership with the Thistle Foundation, an afternoon of world café discussion.

positive nation. The event was opened by Monica Lennon MSP and was a very positive opportunity for more open and inclusive conversations on these health issues.

This year we also hosted an RCN Library event.

menstruation, miscarriage, menopause and gynaecological cancers, and how nursing as a profession has challenged the myths and misconceptions around women's health.

Rather than covering all of the issues raised by the Committee in its call for views, this response focuses on a number of the questions posed.

**1. The Bill has been brought forward partly in response to concerns about "period poverty" - difficulty in being able to afford period products. Do you think period poverty is a serious issue in Scotland? Please provide any relevant information you may have to support your views.**



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