Date: 18 October 2019 **Time:** 10:00am - 12:30pm

Venue: Sighthill Campus, Edinburgh Napier University



MINUTES: Sanitary Support Scheme Best Practice Meeting

Attendees

Tracey	Adamson	TA	University of Stirling
Miriam	Adcock	MA	Zero Waste Scotland
Andy	Anderson	AA	APUC
Hannah	Axon	HA	COSLA
Alison	Boyle	AB	SRUC
Catherine	Bozec	CB	Zero Waste Scotland
Molly	Brown	MB	Hey Girls
Sam	Calder	SC	Bleedin Saor, Edinburgh Napier University
Trudy	Cunningham	TC	University of Dundee
Deborah	Fagan	DF	City of Glasgow College
Zara	Gatt	ZG	University of Glasgow
Brogan	Henderson	ВН	Bleedin Saor, Edinburgh Napier University
Tom	Holm	TH	Universities of Scotland
Courtney	Hughes	CH	University of Glasgow
Lauren	La Rocca	LLR	EAUC Scotland
Megan	McQueen	MM	University of Strathclyde
Ciara	Newell	CN	Forth Valley College
Rebecca	Petford	RP	EAUC Scotland
Shona	Pettigrew	SP	New College Lanarkshire
Karen	Rae	KR	University of Strathclyde
Emma	Roberts	ER	SFC
Kate	Signorini	KS	Open University in Scotland
Silja	Slepnjov	SS	University of Strathclyde
Hannah	Stevens	HS	Bleedin Saor, Edinburgh Napier University
Heather	Valentine	HV	University of Glasgow

Apologies

Beveriey	Armstrong	Dumfries and Galloway College
Lydia	Demaison	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
Suzanne	Marshall	CDN
Jamie	Pearson	Edinburgh Napier University
Sharon	Sweeney	University of Dundee
Linda	Taylor	North East Scotland College

	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS	
1	Welcome, Apologies and Introductions Rebecca Petford, EAUC Scotland	
	Everyone was welcomed. Thanks to Jamie Pearson from Edinburgh Napier University for hosting the event.	
2	Communications – University of Strathclyde Karen Rae, Head of Marketing and Communications, University of Strathclyde Megan McQueen, Digital Marketing Co-ordinator, University of Strathclyde Silja Slepnjov, Student Opportunities Co-Ordinator, University of Strathclyde	
	The Student Union already had period poverty campaigns, so the University asked the Student Union to be part of the Steering Group to identify how best to communicate the Sanitary Scheme to students.	
	Phase 1 – Committee Steering Group	
	 Important to speak to Estates Team and consult with students Ran a student survey to identify the most appropriate products, what users priorities were, and how to receive products Identified 10 key distribution points based on student survey Hosted focus groups including ones with the feminist society, LBQT+ group and open groups for anyone to attend Needed to have a clear message that the scheme is open for everyone to make it as accessible as possible and to reduce stigma 	
	Phase 2 – Branding & Dispensing	
	 Engaged and collaborated with Marketing Department Marketing Team went to locations to see where dispensers could go and what to do instead (all female toilets will have troughs or baskets full of products shortly) 	
	Then began design part, with a focus on clear messaging and wanting to make sure that all students arriving on campus know about the scheme.	
	 Added menstrual products to shop online so students could order full packs from Union, allowing students to access products both on campus and online Rolled out campaign during Freshers' Week – gave away period pouches with discreet branding to help normalise menstruation Worked with Estates Team to help fill 4000 bags that contained 2 night towels, 2 day towels and two tampons along with note inside with key messages (free products for all, if don't require, pass on to someone who does) and handed to all students Launched a magazine for Freshers at Strathclyde – includes a map for locations, information about the campaign and Student Union support 	
	services and advice	
	Phase 3 – Marketing & Communications	
	 In order to reach as many students as possible, they actively use social media and the Student Union website to highlight locations. Fold out leaflets are available at the dispensaries Signs on all toilet cubicle doors letting all students know that it the products 	

are for everyone

 By putting signs on toilet cubicles they learnt that not all cubicles across campus have sanitary bins so they've added information letting students know how to properly dispose of used products

Phase 4 – Feedback and next steps

• Students are looking for eco-friendly and reusable products – now the University are looking to expand the offer to include more reusable options

DISCUSSION

What is uptake like (both on campus and online)?

- SS: Originally low, but after Fresher's Week, now having to refill the dispensaries frequently due to massive uptake (and already have to order more)
- MM: Since Fresher's week 50 students have ordered on online shop (past month)
- SS: Online orders are also picking up and orders are coming in daily around Christmas and summer breaks they change messaging to let them know that out-of-term time products are still offered and they can order online and order a larger package to take away with them
- SS: Highlight the ability to order online in the cubicles and packs are always available at the Student's Union Hub for students to walk up and take away

How do you deal with long distance learners?

 SS: At the moment we don't really know, currently no requests, but have acknowledged in Steering Group that we will need to think about this process and posting costs/requirements

What about the distribution of non-applicator tampons? How is the uptake?

- SS: We asked about this in the survey and there wasn't a difference in responses and based on uptake the University of Strathclyde students are using them
- Other institutions commented that there has been significantly less uptake of non-applicator tampons (and some are no longer ordering these and have a large stockpile)
- SS: University of Strathclyde Student's Union is really engaging with the Estates and Cleaning Teams to help spread awareness of the campaign and to ensure continuing product availability

What reusable products are different institutions offering?

- TA: There seems to be limited call for reusable pads, gave away 300 cups at the University of Stirling Students' Union Green and Blue Space (ask for student ID number due to increased expense) – Highly successful reusable campaign at Stirling and seems that awareness and education is increasing level of interest
- SS: Strathclyde offered reusables from the Union budget rather than Government budget due to delayed decision-making at the institution level. Distributed reusable products at Student Hub – students also submitted their student ID to receive the product. Originally ordered 50 moon cups, 30 sets of reusable pads, and a couple of pairs of period underwear. All distributed during the course of the semester. Cups are more popular and all feedback about reusables has been positive (likely because they got to choose the reusable product that suits them best).

Potential action:
Redistribution scheme for unwanted products to other institutions for use

 Generally institutions are finding that staff and student education and awareness is increasing the demand for reusables – and institutions need to take into account how this balance will shift in the future along with product requirements due to student expectation of access to free products.

Any engagement with local high schools?

SS: Strathclyde have no direct outreach with schools on this, but we can tell
that students this year already have awareness of the campaign – the shift
has already happened. Each year they hold Vagina Talks at Fresher's Week
which talk about periods, and this year there was a marked increase of
people who already use cups.

3 Addressing Distribution Challenges – The Open University in Scotland

Kate Signorini, Depute Director for Strategy, Planning and Resources The Open University in Scotland

Open University is a distance learner provider – so no there is no campus. Sanitary scheme had to be thought about in a totally different way. OU Scotland is part of a larger OU that operates across the UK which has additional implications.

A large portion of students are female, with a wide range of ages and a large percentage living in deprived areas – 72% are low income, 20% live in remote areas and 22% live with a disability.

Setting up the scheme posed a challenge:

- Potentially 10,000 students may be interested and although OU originally thought about sending products to all eligible students by post, it was ultimately decided this wasn't possible due to financial and logistical issues.
- Decided to aligned scheme to Government estimated take-up rate this equated to 3,500 students
- Then looked at the cost of providing an on-demand service but once again posed too difficult with too much in terms of overhead costs
- Also thought about providing vouchers for students to buy their own, but identifying what stores are accessible to eligible students would be difficult and a huge endeavour

Our Solution:

- Provide a grant to students each academic year they have to request (grant is £35)
- Eligibility check is kept to a minimum
 - o Must be OU students and living in Scotland
 - Students must not have already ordered for the year
- Once we have the details and cross-check previous orders, we then issue a cheque
- OU have no way to knowing what the students spend the grant on, but this
 reflects the same risks other institutions have in providing on-site products
 (these institution don't know how they are being used)

Lessons learned:

- Not everyone knows what a sanitary product is mostly due to English language and international backgrounds. OU added the word menstruate to its communications to help clarify.
- Cheques are an outdated form of payment if this scheme is long-running
 OU will need to consider other options, but making payments in another way also means the amount of information asked for will increase.

- Due to potential numbers trying to find the right balance of promoting the scheme is hard. Potentially could have a lot of students requesting the grant, but currently take-up is quite low. OU have needed to remind students of scheme, which results in a spike of grant applications. When promoting the government survey there was also a spike.
- OU started putting baskets into toilets in the offices. Although few students pop-in, there are some student meetings so they now have baskets. Staff feedback has also been positive on the impacts of the initiative for students.
- Not currently offering eco-friendly or reusable products interested in learning more about others' experiences.
- Think it is a great programme England wants to do this and Wales seems to be developing policy.

DISCUSSION

TC: Is it an option to give a map to students all across Scotland to visit local colleges or universities to also have access to products?

- AA: Interesting idea but would require communication between institutions to develop a solution
 - Could affect some institutions more due to population and demand influxes
 - Also the possibility to signpost to local community centres and local authorities to access sanitary products
- KS: Take up is already higher now due to public awareness
- MM: Strathclyde created clear branding to help keep messaging the same across campuses - would need something like this if setting up as one national system
- HA: Recommend getting students involved with the branding and design and helps to give students ownership
- Poster suggestions were released, co-developed by Young Scot, when the scheme was launched. These are used by some institutions and community venues

Potential action:

Develop a national map of where students can collect products from campuses during holidays or if they are distance learners

4 Engagement and Awareness – University of Glasgow

Heather Valentine, Campaigns and Charities Convenor, Queen Margaret Union at the University of Glasgow

At the University of Glasgow the Unions operate independently from the institution, and at Queen Margaret Union free products were introduced a year prior to the Scottish law. Since the Scottish Government campaign there has been a massive uptake, and the Union now use Hey Girls products.

Campaign name: Pads & Pints

This year wanted to focus on improving sustainability and de-stigmatizing periods.

Aim of the Pads & Pints events is that it should be as easy to talk about menstruation at the pub as any other topic

- Created flyers and promoted in university communications for Fresher's Week
- Showed Film Screening of "Pad Man" and "Period. End of Sentence".
- Gave out biodegradable tampons and pads at all events as well as menstrual cups and reusable pads. Also gave instructions on how to create your own reusable pads at home.
- Funding for events came from Union budget just asked for donations to support mental health

Continuing promotion and communications:

- Throughout the year the Union has a condom booth so now it is a condom and period booth. All volunteers are trained on how to distribute and how to use the products. Additional leaflets handed outs for reusable pads and cups on how to use and how to keep clean.
 - Need to improve promotion of condom and period booth as currently only word of mouth. Currently getting posters made to increase awareness.
- International students are getting involved and are very supportive students have been taking some to take to their home country as well.
- Use the word menstrual instead of sanitary to help destigmatise and move away from the industry branding of periods as being unclean.

Challenges:

- The major problem is keeping things in stock, particularly reusable products
- To help increase awareness and education about reusable products they always have one unboxed so students can see them and touch them. Train volunteers on how to engage people. By having people speak face-to-face it becomes more personal and increases confidence to use the products.
- Another issue is the name of the Hey Girls company when promoting
 products at the Union, they talk about how it is a social enterprise, that they
 offer sustainable products, and they are not only just for girls. The LGBTQ+
 Society stick rainbow stickers on the boxes.
- The uptake of reusables has been very high due to increased environmental awareness just need to speak to students to reduce fear factor.

DISCUSSION

Any pushback to the campaign?

 HV: When first put in bathrooms, and only in female or gender neutrals, there were posters ripped down and people flushing tampons down toilets.
 We removed products from bathrooms, but will be putting back in bathrooms as students are now more familiar with the scheme and hopefully more responsible.

How is it working between University of Glasgow and the Union?

- HV: Student representative spoke to Estates to secure reusable products.
 Queen Margaret Union offers the reusable products freely (without requesting student ID numbers). The other Student's Union doesn't provide them as freely. Currently the system is working because they have the products, but need to work on better stock flow between all sites.
 - The major challenge is making sure products are available. To do this, they let Student Representative Council know when stocks are low, and then the Council alerts the Estates Team who then have to distribute. This is proving to be difficult as the Estates Team contact seems to change each time. Staff and Cleaning Team with Estates distribute at all university buildings, but Students Union manage their own.

How many reusable products are taken from Union?

HV: At least 100 cups went through 1 week, and just got 120 more and a
quarter already gone. Reusable pads are already gone – had to reorder. Don't
put reusable ones in bathrooms – only sustainable disposable options.

5 Moving into Engagement and Curriculum, Bleedin Saor – Edinburgh Napier University

Hannah Stevens, Student, Edinburgh Napier University Brogan Henderson, Student, Edinburgh Napier University Sam Calder, Student, Edinburgh Napier University

The <u>Bleedin Saor Project</u> is linked into the 3rd/4th year curriculum across various disciplines at Edinburgh Napier.

The Placement Officer for Product Design students read about period poverty initiatives and the Scottish Government Scheme. They requested students to combine both into a project focused on period dignity rather than period poverty to better communicate that it is for everyone.

Key activities:

- Held the Bloody Big Brunch aim was to break the stigma. Event was in collaboration with Hey Girls and WIRE. To attend you had to donate menstrual products. Hosted across campuses with Events Students – raised over 400 packs of sanitary products that went out to wider community.
- Dispenser Design Project initially the scheme was rolled out with 3 stock points and 1 cupboard of products. Very discreet and little awareness of the dispensers. When students first came onto the project in January 2019, they were tasked to design something to show off products and increase engagement. They designed a dispenser for all products little bins for individual products and full packs in cabinet with posters. The smaller dispensers will be placed across toilets and distribution points across campuses. Students collaborated with Hey Girls so shifted from Playtax and Tampax products to Hey Girls options, and Hey Girls are now making the dispensers widely available. The goal is now for Edinburgh Napier to have as many reusable products as possible (they have also noticed that reusables go much faster).
- Started <u>Period Blether</u> blog to increase communication about periods and hear stories from students.
- Created a documentary to be released next year which documents the whole project, looking at Scotland Government, events which have been held, social enterprises like Hey Girls and other partners, interviews with people at schools and a Uganda case study.
 - Students visited Uganda this past summer as they are pushing sustainable and biodegradable products there (example is the social enterprise company Makapads that make pads out of papyrus and paper waste).
- Bloody Big Bar at Degree Show the show highlighted the Bleedin Saor project and displayed products designed in a creative way
 - Very successful and got staff aware of what is happening

Outcomes and Challenges:

- Spread message through brunch, degree show and freshers' week within 6 hours 600 packs, 8000 tampons, 240 reusable cups, and reusable pads distributed.
- At Freshers had a menstrual cup out of the packaging and showed people how to use it. Once people saw it and learned how to use it, they were more receptive to taking one.

 Keeping reusable products stocked is very difficult. They are also very open with distribution. At Fresher's week, men were taking them for siblings, girlfriends, friends or flatmates – helping to make access more inclusive

DISCUSSION

TA: Are dispensers available for everyone?

• Yes, they are available to purchase – available to view on tour. Dispensers available on website (enquire with Hey Girls). There is also another dispenser available (the long trough version).

Attendees segued into a discussion about the scheme and schools:

- It appears that schools are not as open and some school pupils are encountering many barriers to accessing products
- Various different ways of implementing the scheme at schools due to autonomy and how the local authority put the scheme into effect. Some products are available at primary level (but different visibility and promotion).
- Primary schools are behind high schools some local authorities have started at the scheme at the high school level but it's yet to reach Primary Schools.

6 Tour of Edinburgh Napier University's Distribution Point

Hannah Stevens, Student, Edinburgh Napier University Brogan Henderson, Student, Edinburgh Napier University Sam Calder, Student, Edinburgh Napier University

The Bleedin' Saor team led delegates to the main distribution point on campus to see the way it is used and the visual impact of the storage unit.

7 Guidance for Educational Institutions on Implementing Free Sanitary Products
Emma Roberts, Policy Analysis Officer, Scottish Funding Council
Hannah Axon, Policy Manager, COSLA

HA - Due to discussions and questions around local authorities and schools, more information about local authority delivery and survey findings might be useful.

- With regards to schools, delivery varies. Some local authorities are managing centrally and some are delivering independently at schools.
- Some are distributing from the janitorial/facilities side (focused solely on provision) and others focused heavily on the education side (focusing on topping up products and student engagement).

Feedback from Local Authorities

- Some schools in the Highlands and Islands don't have any eligible students and some haven't received products yet.
- Local authorities are working around the same principles as colleges and universities with focus on access and dignity.
 - Example: Argyll and Bute is a great example all students were part of the design campaign and added to boarding houses at schools
- For communities, provision is expanded on a local authority basis based on footfall and where people can access products: museums, art galleries, youth groups, community centres and libraries. Some local authorities send out products with youth workers and other staff to try and reach intended audiences.

Government Survey Findings

- Desire to work together to see what products are working well across local authorities and colleges / universities
- Survey results vary across communities
- Reusable use is higher than people anticipated (even up to 30% respondents interested) – only a small numbers of reusable products available in schools

QUESTIONS

If a community group is interested in distributing products who would they contact?

HA: Depends on local authority – Some are centrally distributed, some are at
places the local authorities have chosen and delivered directly to them.
Happy to pass on leads at different communities as there are resources
developed and maps to where things are located, so good to join colleges
and local authorities.

ER – SFC and COSLA working to develop guidance on best practice and tips on how to best implement the scheme – going to work with Scottish Government Working Group to put together document. Looking to gain tips and feedback from meeting attendees to inform the guidance document.

Tips and advice offered by meeting attendees:

- Engagement with Hey Girls really educated the college and produced a much better service
- From a procurement perspective, there aren't many suppliers, but Hey Girls really filled niche – to assist college and university procuremen, make sure to provide a list of suppliers and available options (example: vending machines not cost effective, here is what is available, here is what you can get, and then map out different options based on interest and demand)
 - Need to work with Hey Girls to better show full catalogue and prices on the list for universities and colleges
- Different demographics in different places, demands will change and shift based on age and community
- Different makes and types of moon cups (vary in price) and think about accessories like sterilisation cups
- Think about engagement and promotion
 - o Need to focus on residences
- Hey Girls has a distribution guidance package available on the <u>Sustainability</u> Exchange
- Ask students what they want in institutions where it is student led there are more products are being distributed
- Education around periods and destigmatisation very important
- Break down gender barriers open up the conversation
- Important to note that how the scheme is working varies widely across institutions, there are lots of different ways of doing that aren't represented here today

In terms of delivery – do / don't:

- Need both baskets for individual products and boxes (one institution worked with joiners to customize distribution points)
- Visibility is important the more visible, the more accessible
- Must work with Students' Unions / Associations

Potential
action: Link up
distribution
leads in LAs
and
educational
institutions to
make sure
distribution
points in the
area are
effectively
mapped

- Storage needs to be addressed as it is a problem at some institutions
- When looking at reusable products, need to also include education pieces on cleaning, sterilization options, and use

Feedback about taking student numbers in exchange for products? Any other barriers to access to look out for?

- Nothing negative fed back from students just need to be clear about what why collecting number (such as for a feedback survey). Students don't seem to be concerned about giving their number
- Sector needs guidance around who can access the products and when it
 does exist, but needs to specifically address holiday periods. Universities and
 colleges and local authorities need to work together.
- There needs to be some feedback on staff usage. The guidance states that
 employees shouldn't access the products, but it is happening, and by ignoring
 staff you may be also be failing to reach those in period / work poverty.

8 Update on Zero Waste Scotland Re-usable Products Campaign

Catherine Bozec, Consumer Campaigns Manager, Zero Waste Scotland

Zero Waste Scotland in collaboration with Scottish Government are launching a consumer awareness campaign on reusable products next month.

Background and context

- There is increasing interest in reusable products, and with the rollout of period poverty scheme Zero Waste Scotland were instructed by Government to research waste associated with menstrual products.
- Aim of study was it understand public awareness of reusable products and what they think about them.
- Presentation focuses on first 3 objectives of research patterns of use, consumers' attitudes, and motivations to make switch from disposables to reusables.

How research conducted:

- 1. Evidence Review
- 2. Focus Groups with 60 people across Scotland with users and non-users
- 3. Quantitative survey with over 1015 respondents

Highlights of research findings

Patterns of use:

- 6% of respondents were students
- UK usage of reusables is low most users are likely to use disposable sanitary pads with wings
- Almost half of those surveyed are worried about disposal
- 80% of respondents have never tried reusables
 - Currently only 10% use reusables and many people use a mix (only 3% exclusively use reusables)
- Most common reasons why they use the products they do habit, reliability and comfort

Consumers' Attitudes:

- Attitudes toward reusables 3 out of 10 respondents have never heard of reusable menstrual products (little familiarity amongst non-users)
- 21% said no to any trial
- Students are more receptive to trying reusables and more aware of reusables

Motivators to switch:

- Personal factors most important (like comfort, reliability) above environmental
- Free Trial 67% very supportive to trialing reusable products
- Non-users often mentioned environmental reason for making the switch
- Barriers to reusable products use are perceptions of hygiene and effectiveness

Research summary:

- Behaviour is ingrained
- Peer-to-peer awareness important
- Most reusable products are purchased online

Climate impacts:

 Lifecycle analysis of period products – cups have least impact versus disposable tampons/pads which have the most

Campaign Approach

- The main target audience for the campaign is 25-35s given that this audience is not currently receiving many interventions/messages round reusables and are also broadly receptive to giving them a try
- However the messaging is broad-reaching and resources will be available for universities and colleges to share as they wish

#TrialPeriod Campaign:

- 4 week campaign (<u>www.trialperiod.scot</u>) launches 11/11/19
- Free trial via a digital sign-up in partnership with Hey Girls
- Participants are to give feedback on products and will have to complete a survey
- Events include community group workshops in different cities and going into supermarkets to reach other people as an information stand (products only given via online)

Getting involved:

- Incentivise switch to reusable
- Visit website www.trialperiod.scot once it has launched
- Follow Zero Waste Scotland on social media and use the comms toolkit (will be available on the website)

Additional points:

- Recommend using resources will be widely available on the website
- Issues are supply (have limited number available) and to identify what students really prefer to inform college and universities

12 AOB

Young Scot Survey

Young Scot survey has not been shared with the Working Group yet – this should contain great information from student perspective

13 Thanks and Close

Minutes prepared by: Lauren La Rocca Sustainability Engagement Project Officer EAUC-Scotland 18 October 2019