



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY

Period Proud Wales Action Plan

Our plan to end period poverty and achieve period dignity in Wales.

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Ministerial foreword

Periods are natural. They are not a choice. We all either have them, have had them, or know people who do. Periods are not just a 'women's issue', they are not dirty and they are definitely not something to be ashamed of. No-one should be disadvantaged because of their period. Everyone should have access to period products, as and when they are required, to use in a private space that is safe and dignified.

The Welsh Government has worked for a number of years on financial initiatives to tackle period poverty. Eradicating period poverty means ensuring that having a period does not lead to missed education, absences from employment or withdrawal from sport and social activities. Since 2018 we have invested around £12 million to ensure that children and young people and those on low incomes have access to free period products.

The Welsh Government is proud of the impact this funding has had and of the work we have done in partnership with local authorities and health boards to disseminate products through our schools, colleges and communities.

Tackling period poverty remains a priority of the Welsh Government but it is time to go further. Periods impact women, girls and those who menstruate in many ways and this impact goes beyond the time they bleed. The entire menstrual cycle has profound impacts on people's mental and physical health and the ways in which they can live their lives. The effect of mid-cycle symptoms and changes associated with a range of gynaecological conditions and cycle changes relating to menopause and perimenopause can impact on work, health needs, wellbeing and confidence.

This Plan outlines a broad vision to achieve period dignity in Wales. This vision involves ending any sense of stigma and shame associated with periods; normalising people's experience whilst also acknowledging the distress and pain

suffered by those whose periods are not “normal” and considers the impact of periods across a person’s life course and lifestyle.

“ They accepted difficult periods as a way of life and they did not think the GP would be able to help. One woman expressed her sadness towards the difficult periods effecting her sex life and said that she prayed over time the prolonged periods would end. ”

Participant in Welsh Government’s Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan Black Asian and Ethnic Minority Women’s Community Engagement Report.

Period dignity considers the link between periods and broader health issues, the environmental impact of many disposable products, the impact on the workplace and on engagement in sport and culture. The Plan aims to be intersectional, in that it considers period dignity for those with additional protected characteristics and seeks to make provision for additional challenges or cultural requirements. Our consultation evidence suggests differing needs and understanding of periods, in addition to differing experience of help seeking and referral support, linked to varying protected characteristics.

Period dignity and period poverty are children’s rights matters and the plan considers the ongoing work of schools and young people’s services in relation to that.

I would like to express my thanks to our stakeholders, including the Period Dignity Roundtable and to the organisations who have met with us, shared their experiences and run groups and events with us. They have been instrumental in the development of this Plan and I look forward to further joint work in its implementation.

This Plan is based on an open and inclusive consultation process which has engaged a wide range of views on this matter. In running this consultation, we

have taken a promising first step on our journey to normalising periods and achieving period dignity. During our consultation, participants have expressed enjoyment in having an open discussion about their periods and general health matters. For many participants, this consultation was the first time they had spoken about periods and gynaecological health in an open discussion. It is clear, that in providing the safe space and opportunity for women particularly, to share their lived experiences has helped facilitate a sense of empowerment and confidence to share personal experiences amongst peers. I am so pleased by these outcomes, and I am committed to continuing this national conversation as we strengthen communications and campaigning on period dignity over the coming years.

The work to implement this Plan is already underway and I look forward to furthering collaboration with our partners, stakeholders and the citizens of Wales to achieve the significant culture change we are aiming for, a Period Proud Wales.

Jane Hutt MS.

Minister for Social Justice.

Background

2018

The Welsh Government provides £920,000 to local authorities to address period poverty.

2019

With a broader focus on period dignity, the Welsh Government announces £2.5 million for local authorities and Further Education to provide free period products in all schools in Wales.

Additional funding is provided to ensure provision of free period products within Further Education Institutions (FEIs) across Wales.

£1.5 million was allocated via HEFCW to enable institutions to improve and share effective practice in safeguarding policies and to support further initiatives to address period poverty.

Period products are made available, free of charge, for all hospital inpatients.

The Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) seek feedback from local authorities regarding the current funding arrangements and any areas they would like addressed in any future funding.

2020

The Welsh Government provides over £2 million pounds to continue to ensure that period products can be accessed free of charge by learners in schools, Further Education Institutions, to those in need in communities and to hospital inpatients. This year we asked that 50% of the products, purchased through grant, be plastic free or reusable.

Working with Eco Schools, we provide resources for schools to break down the social stigma and taboos around periods and period products.

The Welsh Government officials hold a workshop with stakeholders, including

members of the Period Dignity Roundtable, to inform future policy and this strategy.

The COVID pandemic prevents final development and publication of a draft Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan, however we work with local authorities, the WLGA and FEIs to ensure that the distribution methods for period products are adapted to ensure that period products are made available to those in need across Wales and that consistent messaging is shared that products are still available.

2021

In June the Welsh Government publishes the Programme for the 6th Senedd; founded on the distinctively Welsh values of community, equality and social justice. It makes specific reference to period dignity with the inclusion of the following commitments:

- embed period dignity in schools
- expand our free period provision in communities and the private sector

In October we published the Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan for consultation. Over £3 million pounds is made available to ensure that period products can be accessed free of charge by learners in schools, Further Education Institutions and to those in need in communities.

2022

The Welsh Government increase funding to ensure that period products can be accessed free of charge by learners in schools, Further Education Institutions and to those in need in communities to £3.7 million.

Work begins to develop a national campaign on period dignity and to co-produce education resources on menstrual wellbeing.

2023

The Period Dignity Strategic Action Draft Plan is renamed 'A Period Proud Wales: The Welsh Government plan to end period poverty and achieve period dignity in Wales' and is published.

The case for change

Achieving period dignity is a key element of the Welsh Government wider vision and ambition to achieve a gender equal Wales.

As Plan International state in their **“Break the Barriers” report** “the taboos and lack of education surrounding menstruation have had a number of tangible, negative impacts on girls’ day-to-day lives”. These impacts are wide ranging and potentially long term.

“ I was so scared I didn’t know anything about even the word [period]. When I saw the blood I didn’t know what it was, I thought it was a cut and was trying to wipe it off and asked my mother what it was and she explained that you needed to use the pad. ”

Participant in Welsh Government’s Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan Black Asian and Ethnic Minority Women’s Community Engagement Report.

In 2014 the **UN Human Rights Council** acknowledged that lack of menstrual health management and stigma associated with menstruation have a negative

impact on gender equality. The Welsh Government's own engagement activity undertaken with communities and individuals across Wales demonstrates the link between menstruation and gender-based constructs, shame, sexual violence, so-called honour based abuse and Female Genital Mutilation, linking this matter with broader gender based disadvantage and violence against women.

Plan International, and others researching this area, as well as **the engagement work undertaken by the Welsh Government to design this plan** sets out a series of potential, negative experiences, which can contribute to this disadvantage:

- Lack of education around menstruation, offered at appropriate times by skilled professionals, can negatively affect future sexual and reproductive health. For Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in Wales, this is particularly relevant as many of these women rely on schools to begin the conversation around periods, in order to build on it at home.
- Negative attitudes towards menstruation by peers, and related sexual harassment, can affect girls' motivation to study, their self-esteem and their self-worth, which can lead to them having lower ambitions and career expectations.
- The silence surrounding menstruation can lead to a lack of knowledge and choice amongst young people about reusable menstrual products, and therefore the possible options regarding their own bodies.
- A lack of information about both reusable products as well as how to dispose safely of non-reusable menstrual products has a negative environmental impact.
- A lack of support and education in schools for girls and others who menstruate, about menstruation, can feed into school absenteeism, and lead to those who are menstruating missing out on activities such as sport, due to worrying about leaking, as well as potentially affecting their views about physical exercise in the future. **Women in sport research** has found that as girls try to manage periods this can lead to long term absences and habits

that are difficult to reverse.

- The **menstrual cycle is also known to affect many chronic health conditions**, such as anxiety, asthma, depression, irritable bowel syndrome, migraine and epilepsy, yet very few people are aware of this link.
- **Research** (Lancastle, D. Work-related disruption associated with heavy menstruation and gynaecological diagnoses. University of South Wales, February 2020) suggests that the impact of heavy periods and gynaecological conditions on employment may be chronic and, as they are likely to be experienced on a monthly basis; have an ongoing impact on women and their careers. Women living with heavy periods and gynaecological conditions are likely to experience disruption to their employment on more days per month than women without such conditions. It is also important to note that women notice some disruption to their work due to their bleeding whether or not their bleeding is heavy and whether or not they have a gynaecological diagnosis.
- Moreover, access to menstrual products is a key issue for those living in poverty. Alongside the physical impact of not having access to appropriate sanitary protection, the experience of poverty can also be linked to feelings of shame, associated with not 'fitting in', and not being able to do what peers are doing. Period taboos often lead to girls feeling shame about their bodies and menstruation. When this shame is combined with the shame associated with poverty, **the experience can have disproportionately negative impacts on girls' lives**.

At the time of writing, the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and a cost of living crisis are compounding the experience of period poverty for many. According to **Plan International**, the amount of girls reporting period poverty increased between the COVID-19 lockdowns and over 1 million girls in the UK struggled to afford or access period products during the pandemic.

A **2022 WaterAid survey** suggests that almost a quarter of those who menstruate in the UK (24%) say that they or their family have struggled to afford period products in the last year and nearly a third (32%) worry they won't be able

to afford products in the future. The research also outlines that 20% of participants use makeshift materials, such as loo roll or sponges to manage their period and 26% wear period products for longer than they should, risking their health.

Evidence provided by Mela Cymru through the **consultation process** suggests that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women are at higher risk of period poverty, menstrual stigmatization, and underrepresentation in discussions regarding menstrual health issues. Given that the **proportion of working age disabled people living in poverty** is higher than the proportion of working age non-disabled people we are also concerned for a disproportionate impact on disabled people in Wales.

“ I became gentle, I’m not tough again ... it changed my behaviour, this thing changed my life ...the following month I said to my mother “it coming out again” and she would say don’t worry, don’t worry and wore the cloth again ... before I was tough, I used to make trouble with people, but as soon as I started this I became so quiet ...so gentle ... it changed everything My Period is what changed me. ”

Participant in Welsh Government’s Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan Black Asian and Ethnic Minority Women’s Community Engagement Report.

The purpose of the Period Proud Wales Plan

This Plan sets out the Welsh Government’s approach to ensuring period dignity in Wales. The Plan is grounded in a commitment to work across Government, and with stakeholders, to develop and deliver a series of wide-ranging, holistically intersecting actions.

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The timeframe for the Plan will apply over the next 5 years.

Vision

“ Boys need to be taught so they grow up to be understanding and compassionate. ”

Participant in Welsh Government's Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan Black Asian and Ethnic Minority Women's Community Engagement Report.

By 2027 we will live in a Wales where:

- periods are fully understood, accepted and a normalised topic of conversation. It is widely recognised that periods are not a choice and period products are not a luxury
- women, girls and those who have periods have easy, respectful and open access to good quality and safe products of their choice, when and where necessary
- equitable access to provision across Wales exists, whilst allowing for local arrangements
- the stigma, taboos and myths which exist have been challenged through provision of information and educational resources. No-one is ashamed or embarrassed about periods and can speak openly and confidently about them, whether they have periods or do not
- understanding of periods will extend beyond the bleeding part of the cycle to the whole menstrual cycle, recognising that people who menstruate experience cycle-related impacts (physical and psychological) and needs throughout their cycles
- the potential impact of periods and how they may change during the perimenopause, menopause and as a result of broader health issues is widely understood and

- this impact is responded to safely and non-judgmentally within education, employment and health based settings
- women, girls and people who menstruate feel able to access health-based services around their period and related matters and are confident that these services will be sensitive and informed by sex and gender
- a broader range of period products are in use, limiting the negative environmental impact of many disposable products
- women, girls and all those who have periods:
 - fully understand their period and know what is normal for them
 - are confident to seek help and medical advice, if necessary
 - do not face health inequalities when seeking medical advice or help
 - know how best to manage their period to ensure it does not negatively impact on their life
 - have an understanding of the different types of products available, their correct use and disposal, and can choose the most appropriate product for them
 - have access to appropriate facilities to enable them to manage their period in privacy, with dignity and in a healthy way
- the historic normalisation of what might be medically concerning symptoms in relation to periods is challenged

It is important to note that broader socio-economic and environmental factors will affect our ability to meet this vision. Poverty will impact a person's ability to choose and benefit from reusable products, especially if they do not have access to adequate washing facilities or live in an energy-poor household. Moreover, whilst the plan prioritises mitigation of the environmental impact of single use period products, it is also important to state that this prioritisation does not aim to apportion blame or disproportionate responsibility for climate change on women, girls and those who menstruate.

Women's Health and health inequalities

Asylum Seekers and Refugees, Black Asian and Minority Ethnic people, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and rural communities can all face barriers in accessing health services. As the **consultation exercise** undertaken by Mela Cymru and Women Connect First sets out, the strength of the ethnic difference in menstrual cycle length and variability is noteworthy and there are differences in the views and experiences of British/Welsh born women educated in the British education system and women who were born in other countries of origin.

Ensuring period dignity means ensuring that women, girls and people who menstruate do not face health inequalities when seeking medical help. As such, this Plan should be considered alongside other Welsh Government policies, plans and legislation which seek to address these inequalities, including the:

- **Welsh Government LGBTQ+ Action Plan**
- **Advancing Gender Equality in Wales Plan**
- **Travelling to better health, Action on Independent living**
- **A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care**
- **A Nation of Sanctuary: Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan**
- **Enabling Gypsies, Roma and Travellers plan**
- **Welsh Government Strategic Equality Plan 2020 to 2025**

As outlined above, the Period Proud Wales Plan aims to normalise the experience of periods but it does not aim to normalise very painful or very difficult periods. Whilst some period pain is common, period pain caused by an underlying medical condition can be more severe and have serious and long-lasting implications on those who suffer.

Throughout development of this Plan we have considered the intersection of the

experience of periods and a potential changing of periods with other health issues. This consideration has included the perimenopause, the menopause, endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) and gynaecological cancers. Although these issues have an effect beyond the direct health impacts, we are not of the view that amalgamation of actions around these health issues in this Plan provides the specificity of consideration required to improve their experience. As such, we have included actions that are holistic and address wider impacts of some of these issues, on employment, in relation to research and to product availability for example.

The forthcoming Welsh Government Women's Health Plan contains a section on periods which should be considered in conjunction with this Plan.

Normalisation

The term "normalisation" is used within this document to support the aim of ending stigma, taboo and discomfort in talking about and understanding periods. We acknowledge that many people do not have periods that they would describe as "normal" and some are living with menstrual health conditions which have a significant and negative impact on health, fertility, educational attainment and future prospects. The term "normalisation" is not used to underplay the seriousness of this.

The language used in the Plan

Some of the language and euphemisms used to describe periods and period products can reinforce stigma, myths and embarrassment.

We want to use clear, consistent and straightforward language. The terms "periods", "period products", "period dignity" and "period poverty" are used

throughout this document and we aim to use imagery that is bold to ensure we do not shy away from the reality of periods and normalise the sight of menstrual bleeding, this is a key element of period pride.

We recognise that some people may not feel comfortable using this language or seeing this imagery initially and that in some cultures, the term “period” is a word that isn’t often used and is in itself, a barrier to discussion. However, by normalising language and images around periods and ending the shame and stigma associated with them we aim to build confidence in discussing periods in open and straightforward terms.

Of course, when working directly with individuals, communities and groups it is important to use accessible language and the language preferred by an individual and ensure all discussion is informed by cultural understanding and sensitivity.

Using inclusive language

The language within this plan aims to be inclusive and to consider the experience of women, girls and anyone who menstruates.

Menstruation is a specific experience of the female sex and the plan refers frequently to women and girls for this reason. However not all people who are assigned female at birth, or who identify as women, menstruate. Conversely, there are people who identify as genders other than women, such as trans men, intersex and non-binary people, who do menstruate.

Where actions in this plan are aimed specifically at a particular group, specific language around that group is used. As a result, this plan includes use of the terms “women”, “girl”, “those who menstruate”, “learner” and “patient” throughout. In order to be inclusive, the term “women, girls and person who menstruates” will be used most frequently to encompass all affected by this plan

and we hope that as we implement our communication aims, we will be able to improve awareness of why this language is important.

Where research or publications cited in this plan uses particular language, that language is reproduced here.

Strategic governance, engagement and ongoing involvement

To ensure the success of this work, it is crucial that the correct governance arrangements are in place and that we continue engaging relevant stakeholders and partner organisations. As a part of this, we will continue to hold Period Dignity Roundtable meetings, chaired by the Minister for Social Justice, to oversee implementation of the Period Proud Wales Plan and to advise on emerging issues and opportunities. We will also continue to work closely with WLGA and the Period Dignity Leads from every local authority as well as our Equality Forums.

Via the membership of the roundtable group, citizens in Wales will have a voice and platform through which to engage with the Welsh Government and Ministers and to raise emerging issues and issues that matter to them and consider possible solutions.

Collaboration and partnership between local authorities and government will take place to share best practice, address operational issues and foster innovation in relation to period dignity.

Policy work related to period poverty and period dignity will be informed by intersectional views from across a range of protected characteristics.

Work with Children in Wales to identify a method of ongoing engagement with children and young people to ensure implementation of this plan is overseen and

informed by children and young people's experiences and revised in line with their shifting experiences. The Period Proud Wales Plan will be overseen, informed and, where necessary, revised to reflect children and young people's experiences.

Inclusion, public awareness and reducing stigma

Communications is central to the delivery of this Plan. In order to ensure its successful delivery, we will develop a Period Dignity communications strategy and campaign, aimed at ending stigma and taboo related to periods, opening up wider conversations around periods for all, regardless of age or gender and to help increase use of reusable products and minimise the environmental impact of period products.

The communications Plan will be co-produced with direct input from women, girls and all those who have periods, regarding how best to reach them.

It will be constructed in an inclusive way that ensures we reach as many communities as possible. It will consider the potential of targeting separate audiences such as Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, children and young people, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, and it will include specific actions to engage men and boys. It will include materials in community languages and accessible formats.

Such a campaign will have additional benefits for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic women by challenging the deeply culturally embedded idea of periods being a taboo and engaging men and boys in the discussion.

The Plan will include schools, local authorities, further education colleges, work-based learning and youth services. We will also seek to identify options for collaboration with local health boards and women's health specialists.

Case studies will be used across the public and private sector and across all levels of education. Lived experience associated with period dignity will inform learning and communications resources and contribute to achieving culture change across Wales. The lived experience of people from a diverse range of backgrounds will be sought, including women, girls, trans masculine and non-binary individuals, people who are disabled, refugee or asylum seekers, those from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background, those who hold various religious beliefs, those from a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller community and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

Our actions to make a Period Proud Wales

Access to products

Action 1: the Welsh Government's Programme for Government commits to the expansion of free period provision in communities and the private sector

To achieve this, we will:

- provide funding to local authorities via the period dignity grant to enable the provision of free period products to all learners, throughout youth services and to those on low incomes
- through the Wales TUC, Work with our trade unions, public services, private and third sectors to encourage partners to make period products freely available in toilet facilities for staff and visitors
- provide funding to Further Education Institutions via the period dignity grant to ensure access to period products, free of charge, in the most dignified way possible, to all learners and those in the college community who require access to period products, prioritising those from low-income households

- assess provision and options for provision of period products within various health settings such as hospitals, GP surgeries, sexual health clinics and community health spaces

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government.
- Arm's Length Bodies.
- Local authorities.
- Welsh Government youth work team.
- Third Sector Partners.
- Wales TUC.

When will it be done?

- Annually.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- Free period products will be available in every school in Wales and across a range of community venues including (but not limited to) food banks, libraries, leisure centres, family centres, community hubs, youth services.
- Free period products will be available in every Further Education Institution in Wales to all learners and those in the college community who require access to period products.
- Via the Wales TUC and third sector partners, there will be an increase in provision of free period products for staff and visitors.
- Period products will be available to staff and visitors at sports and cultural venues (including the museum and library estate and CADW run sites).
- Period products will be available in healthcare settings most suitable to

community need.

Action 2: undertake an evaluation of the period dignity grant for the period 2018 to 2022 and use the findings of the evaluation to inform a strategic, longer-term approach to the provision of period products across Wales

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government Equality and Knowledge and Analytical Services team.

When will it be done?

- Evaluation commissioned November 2022 with findings expected November 2023.
- Funding plan by March 2024.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- A strategic, long-term approach to the provision of period products across Wales is informed by a clear evidence base.

Guidance and reducing stigma

Action 3: the Welsh Government's Programme for Government commits to embedding period dignity in schools

To achieve this, we will:

- ensure period dignity is considered in future equality and education national guidance for schools, local authorities and FE colleges
- co-produce the development of appropriate resources and explore the means by which these resources should be disseminated, in support of the inclusion of menstrual well-being in the Relationships and Sexuality Education Code
- we will also build on the promising work and investment undertaken by universities in Wales and continue to work with the HE sector to promote period dignity as part of institutions' well-being and health improving safeguarding policies and practices
- education resources will also be provided to youth services across Wales to ensure that youth workers are able to offer safe, accurate information to young people on periods and menstrual wellbeing

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government Curriculum and Equalities teams.

When will it be done?

- March 2023.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- A comprehensive suite of educational resources related to menstrual wellbeing will be available to learners, educators and parents across Wales. These resources will support the inclusion of menstrual well-being within the Relationships and Sex Education code. Resources will be co-produced with stakeholders and will be inclusive and take into account the needs and experiences of a diverse group of learners.
- Youth workers in Wales will be informed and educated on period dignity and able to offer safe advice to young people and signpost to appropriate services.
- Information on how to access free period products in every local authority in Wales will be available via the NHS Wales Bloody Brilliant site.

Action 4: work with our trade unions, public services, private and third sectors to create guidance and promote policies on period dignity and the menopause and to ensure educational and practical period dignity resources are available

Business Wales will promote educational and practical guidance for period dignity resources with Welsh businesses and entrepreneurial communities in order to raise awareness of period dignity in the workplace via the Business Wales online channels.

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government Equalities team.
- Business Wales.
- Wales TUC.

When will it be done?

- March 2025.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- Public, private and third sector organisations across Wales will have greater awareness of the need for practical support around period dignity. Good practice will be shared throughout and organisations will have a renewed approach to period dignity, including issues related to the menopause, perimenopause and other health issues that involve vaginal bleeding.

Action 5: the Welsh Government, through collaboration between the equalities and staff menopause working group will review, and re-publish our menopause policy and working to include broader content on period dignity

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government Equalities, HR and facilities teams.
- Trade Unions.

When will it be done?

- March 2025.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- Staff working for the Welsh Government will have recourse to additional support when experiencing the perimenopause and menopause, via a comprehensive policy.
- Ongoing work will be influenced by staff experience.

The environment and international development

Action 6: increase provision of plastic free products, products with reduced plastic content, reduced plastic packaging, packaging in general or reusable products year on year

This aim will be balanced with ensuring there is a choice of products available for those for whom reusable products are not culturally acceptable, restricted by the experience of poverty, living conditions (houses of multiple occupancy etc.) or are unsuitable due to an impairment or neurodivergence.

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government.

When will it be done?

- March 2026.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- By 2027 90% to 100% of the period products funded by the Welsh Government period dignity grant will be plastic free, products with reduced plastic content, reduced plastic packaging, packaging in general or reusable. This action will help support the Welsh Government's commitment to preventing plastic pollution and forms part of our wider response to the climate and nature emergencies.
- Within this work we will consider those with particular menstrual health conditions, cultural needs or for those who have experienced trauma to ensure appropriate products remain on offer.

Action 7: extend the Wales and Africa Small Grants Scheme to actively encourage period dignity project proposals in Sub-Saharan Africa

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government Wales and Africa team.

When will it be done?

- From March 2023.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- Projects to support period dignity in Sub-Saharan Africa, such as developing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) areas in education and health

settings, and providing affordable, reusable products will be welcomed for grant funding.

Engagement, Equality and Inclusion

Action 8: ensure that products can be accessed, and that guidance is created with equality and inclusion as a central pillar

To ensure this, we will:

- engage with the Disability Rights Taskforce, the Disability Equality Forum and other representative groups to identify barriers and options through which provision and guidance can be improved
- consider the role of social care workers and the quality and range of adult changing facilities
- ensure that NHS Wales, Social Care Wales and social care providers and commissioners embed LGBTQ+ health and social care training through the implementation of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan
- for both guidance and provision we will identify priority groups currently excluded from current provision and explore options to reach such groups, including through funding provision e.g. Asylum Seekers and Refugees, Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, those in prison and the homeless

Guidance will be developed bilingually to ensure support for individuals to discuss period health through the medium of Welsh.

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government Disability Taskforce.
- The Welsh Government Equality team.

When will it be done?

- December 2025.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- Disabled people, including those with learning impairments, will be supported to play a central role in recognising and defining the problems they experience and in creating resources that are effective and accessible. Support for social care workers around providing period dignity will be in place. Parents, unpaid carers and teachers supporting disabled people will also access this information.
- Disabled people will have access to relevant information in appropriate forms. Depending on specific impairments, this may include tactical tools or more audio-visual materials with sign language, or shorter session plans.
- Health and social care based clinicians will have improved understanding, knowledge and awareness of the experience of trans and non-binary individuals and encourage relevant health practices.
- Communities, groups and individuals who are under-served by the period dignity policy will be considered to ensure they are reached and provided with period products in appropriate and accessible ways.
- Support for individuals to discuss period health will be available through the medium of Welsh.

Action 9: strengthen links between local authority period dignity leads, statutory unpaid carers services and third sector carers organisations to improve access to information and advice, appropriate support services and where period products can be accessed

There will also be a focus on support for young carers and young adult carers.

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government Unpaid Carers and Older People's Rights and Equality branch.
- Local authorities and unpaid carer services.
- Third Sector national carers' organisations and regional/local carer network partners.

When will it be done?

- May 2023.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- Unpaid adult carers and young carers will have access to advice and support from statutory, public and third sector services, including where they can access supplies of period products.

Action 10: in partnership with Sport Wales, assess the impact of periods on women, girls and people who menstruate's participation in sport and exercise and consider options through which to improve

and maintain participation levels for those who menstruate

Who is responsible?

- The Welsh Government.
- Sport Wales.
- The Welsh Government Knowledge and Analytical Services team.

When will it be done?

- March 2026.

What will be the outcome of this action?

- The impact of periods on the participation of women, girls and those who menstruate in sport will be understood and actions will be designed to improve participation levels.

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