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# Exploring Welsh food bank responses to period poverty: Results from a small scale online survey

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

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## **Executive Summary**

- This paper reports on a piece of in house research carried out by Welsh Government Knowledge and Analytical services surveying a number of Trussell Trust and independent food banks in Wales. The research has focused on these food banks' experiences of feminine hygiene product provision for people accessing their food banks.
- The research had three broad aims, firstly to explore the prevalence of period poverty from the perspective of those volunteering and working at food banks and to find out if work is being carried out by food banks in Wales to address any increase in demand they may be experiencing for feminine hygiene products. Another aim was to gain an insight into any practical on the ground action that is being taken to supply feminine hygiene products and to uncover any examples of best practice. The final aim of the research was to gain a greater understanding of the issue of period poverty through the information gathered in regards to the experiences of food banks.
- A short online survey was distributed to a sample of the 37 Trussell Trust food banks in operation in Wales and 5 additional charities that operate food banks within the region making up a sample of 42 food banks contacted. In total, 28 food bank representatives responded to the survey, this represents a response rate of 67%.

## **Provision of feminine hygiene products**

- All 28 respondents reported supplying feminine hygiene products to their customers and awareness of period poverty was cited as the main reason for the supply of these items. Across the 21 food banks that stated they offer the items, it was reported that staff at a number of sites will directly ask customers if they have a requirement for feminine hygiene products and offer them when necessary. From the total sample of 28 respondents, 22 reported that they encounter people requesting products on behalf of their partners or other family members.
- Ten food banks responded that they provide items as part of a toiletry pack consisting of other toiletries and 13 responded that they are supplied as a pack of feminine hygiene products. A majority of respondents stated that they give people a choice of which products they would like.

- The food banks were asked about any practical arrangements they had made on site to help with providing of feminine hygiene products. A majority of respondents said they had taken steps to ensure privacy and dignity of customers. Such as extra storage to provide items. Work to source donations was mentioned by nine food banks and training of volunteers mentioned by four.

### **Feedback from customers**

- Overall, 12 respondents highlighted that they had received some form of feedback from customers in regards to their provision of feminine hygiene products. Of the 12 who said they had received feedback, 10 reported that customers express gratefulness or a sense of relief upon receiving the products.

### **Donations**

- All 28 respondents stated that their food banks receive donations of feminine hygiene products. These donations were reported as being supplied by members of the public by 25 out of the 28 food banks respondents. Charities were cited by four of the respondents and feminine hygiene product producers cited by one.
- Overall, 12 respondents stated that they had made requests for donations or include feminine hygiene products as an item which can be donated as part of their donation information. The most frequently reported outlet for requesting donations from was supermarkets or shops such as chemists. Social media was also mentioned by a small number of food banks as a way to reach out more widely for donations with local groups and charities also mentioned. These requests for donations were on the whole reported as being successful.

### **Demand / Take up**

- The level of demand and take-up of feminine hygiene products was described as “high” or “some” demand for feminine hygiene products by 21 food banks. Three indicated that there is low demand and the remaining four stated that the products are provided as standard universally and therefore the demand for these products couldn't be commented upon.

- Of all respondents, 23 food banks described there being “high” or “some” take up of feminine hygiene products at their food bank. Three couldn’t comment on the take up as they stated the products were provided as standard universally. Only two described the take up as “low” at their food bank.

### **Further feedback from food banks**

- All respondents were asked if there were any further comments they would like to make on the issue of period poverty before they completed the survey. Thematic analysis was carried out to identify any recurring themes that emerged from the free text feedback.
- One prominent theme that emerged from the free text response is that of donations and the link between these and the recent media attention that the issue of poverty has been receiving. Some respondents noted that they felt there had been an increase in the regularity or amount of products being donated because of more extensive media coverage.
- Another theme that emerged from the feedback was that of sanitary provision in schools. Anecdotal evidence of girls in school being in need of donations of feminine hygiene products and other forms of toiletries was put forward by some respondents.

### **Conclusions**

- This report is based on a small sample of food banks in Wales; however it provides a valuable insight into the current work of food banks in the area of period poverty. Overall, all of the respondents to the survey reported supplying feminine hygiene products to their food bank customers and these are on the whole, offered to people who visit the food bank, as opposed to customers needing to request items.
- Of those who offer the items, there was an indication that generally food banks will *directly ask* customers whether or not they require feminine hygiene products. A number of sites demonstrated awareness that it may not just be female customers who require these.
- Half of respondents stated they hadn’t received feedback from customers in regards to the provision of feminine hygiene products, but a proportion did. The main themes of the feedback received centred around feelings of relief from customers that the service was available. Donations of items were reported from all 28 respondents with a majority of

these coming from members of the public. Donation requests had been made by 16 respondents and these were predominantly made to supermarkets or shops such as chemists; these requests were largely successful.

- “High” and “some” demand of feminine hygiene products was reported by 21 food banks. Respectively, 23 food banks described “high” or “some” take up of feminine hygiene.
- Qualitative responses were insightful and offered two predominant themes around the issue of period poverty. The first of these was donations and the link between these and the recent media attention that period poverty has been receiving and the second was sanitary provision in schools and the effect that respondents feel period poverty is having on school pupils. This was mainly based on anecdotal evidence of incidences that the respondents had heard of.

## 1 Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In March 2018, the Welsh Government announced the allocation of £1.14 million to help address the issue of period poverty within Welsh communities. Period poverty is a term which is used to describe the situation of being unable to afford feminine hygiene products due to financial constraints.
- 1.2 Local Authorities are set to receive £440,000 as part of this funding allocation over the next two years to help alleviate period poverty in the most deprived communities in Wales. A further £700,000 of capital funding has also been allocated to improve school toilet facilities and sanitary equipment, such as disposal bins to ensure pupils have dignity in managing their periods.
- 1.3 Julie James AM, Leader of the House and Chief Whip, has stated:  
“Local councils are best placed to know where to target effective action for tackling period poverty in their communities, which is why we are asking them to use this funding to distribute feminine hygiene products to those who need them most.  
“This could be through community groups, schools or food banks. We have heard reports that mothers are going without so that their daughters can have access to sanitary products which is absolutely unacceptable in our society. This funding will help to address that very real need.”<sup>1</sup>
- 1.4 The evidence surrounding the extent of period poverty in Wales and the wider UK however is lacking. The charity [Plan International published figures](#) at the end of 2017 from a survey of 1,000 girls and young women aged 14-21 across the UK which indicated that 1 in 10 of those surveyed have been unable to afford feminine hygiene products and 1 in 7 have had to ask to borrow these from a friend due to affordability issues. Further to this, just over 1 in 10 of the girls surveyed (12 per cent) disclosed that they have needed to “improvise sanitary wear due to affordability issues”.

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<sup>1</sup> [Welsh Government. 2018:](#)

- 1.5 However, this research hasn't explored issues that women over the age of 21 may be experiencing. Furthermore the age range of those surveyed may indicate that there are affordability issues in regards to these products within the wider household as a proportion of the 14 to 21 year olds surveyed will be dependent on their parent or guardian's income.
- 1.6 Further to this, the affordability of feminine hygiene products is an issue which has also received publicity recently through discussions of the VAT imposed on them; what has come to be known as "the tampon tax". Feminine hygiene products are currently taxed at 5% in the UK and in the spring of 2016 a petition calling for the abolishment of tax on feminine hygiene products received over 300,000 signatures. A [Tampon Tax Fund](#) has been established from the VAT on sanitary products and is administered by the UK Government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. It has supported a wide range of projects across the UK supporting women and girls in the region of £47m since 2015.
- 1.7 A recent [Channel 4 fact check summary](#) highlights that regardless of what may be the cost of an average period, those struggling financially may still not be able to afford a sum of money which seems relatively affordable to others on higher incomes. Estimates on how much people spend on feminine hygiene products per year do vary and the individual experiences of women and girls can be hugely diverse for a variety of reasons. For example, some people who have heavy periods will need more feminine hygiene products than those who have lighter periods. Also there may be a need to purchase extra medication to help manage the pain that periods can cause for some people.

### **Food bank survey of period poverty**

- 1.8 Given this lack of research, further research to try and build a wider understanding of period poverty in Wales was identified to try and ascertain who is affected by this issue and how it is currently being addressed. This report is based on research conducted by Welsh Government Social Researchers. This was a short online survey sent to a sample of food banks in Wales. The results of which have been used to begin to build up a body of evidence on the issue of period poverty and uncover what is happening on the ground in food banks to support people experiencing it.

- 1.9 The rationale behind the Welsh Government surveying food banks is to build upon pre-existing work carried out by the [Trussell Trust](#) in 2017 on the “extent of need, method of provision and source of supply of feminine hygiene products” within food banks in Scotland. This 2017 report indicates that around “50% of people surveyed while at a food bank could not afford toiletries”. The conversation around this has recently brought the issue of period poverty to the forefront of public dialogue and garnered interest from the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government.
- 1.10 Scottish Government actions have resulted in a Programme for Government commitment costing £5.2m for universal provision of sanitary products to students in schools, colleges and universities. In addition, Scottish Government is providing targeted support for low income families. [FareShare](#)<sup>2</sup> will receive more than £500,000 to distribute sanitary products to an estimated 18,800 people across Scotland.

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<sup>2</sup> “FareShare are the UK’s largest charity fighting hunger and food waste. They redistribute surplus food to frontline charities and community groups”: Scottish Government, 2018.

## 2 Methodology

### Aims and Objectives

2.1 The main aims of this research are to:

- explore the prevalence of period poverty from the perspective of those working and volunteering at food banks and to find out if work is being done by food banks in Wales to address any increase in demand they may be experiencing for feminine hygiene products
- gain an insight into any practical on the ground action that is being taken to supply feminine hygiene products and to uncover any examples of best practice
- gain a greater understanding of the issue of period poverty through the information gathered in regards to the experiences of food banks.

### Method

#### *Sample*

2.2 Across the UK, the [Trussell Trust](#) currently has a network of 420 food banks which operate out of around 1,230 centres nationally. In Wales there are currently 37 Trussell Trust food banks with a network of 112 affiliated centres and between April 2017 and March 2018, 98,350 three day emergency food supply parcels were distributed by the charity<sup>3</sup>. The Wales wide and nationwide food bank population comprises of not only Trussell Trust food banks, but also independent food banks run by community groups and other charitable organisations.

2.3 Mapping this network and ascertaining precise numbers in terms of the food banks that are currently operational is difficult and until recently there has been no cohesive database that tracks the location of all food banks regardless of affiliation. However, recent work by Bangor University ([Beck et al. 2016](#)) has aimed to map a database of food banks within Wales and document how the numbers of food banks in Wales have changed over recent years.

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<sup>3</sup> [Trussell Trust. End of year stats 2017-2018.](#)

- 2.4 [Beck et al. \(2016\)](#) highlight the difficulties that can arise in trying to track food banks as “some independent food banks have a very small, if at all any web presence” and may not be widely known about within the local community. At the time of publication, Beck *et al.*'s (2016) paper identified 157 sites operating as food banks in Wales at the time of data collection in July 2015 which included Trussell Trust food banks, centres and independent food banks.
- 2.5 Due to resource constraints and the issues discussed in accurately identifying the total population of Welsh food banks it was not possible to acquire a completely representative sample of food banks in Wales for the purposes of this research. As a result, the sample of food banks used in this research is based on an opportunity sampling method of all Trussell Trust food banks in Wales and a small number of additional charitable organisations.
- 2.6 This research is intended to be an exploratory piece of work to try and gain an initial understanding of food bank responses to clients who may be experiencing period poverty. It also hopes to shed light on how prevalent the issue is amongst food banks that take part in the research and uncover some recurring themes of best practice.
- 2.7 This research consisted of a short online survey distributed to a sample of the 37 Trussell Trust food banks in operation in Wales and 5 additional charities that operate food banks within the region making up a sample of 42 food banks contacted. The 42 food banks were contacted by email requesting their participation in the survey and 28 food banks responded, this represents a response rate of 67%.
- 2.8 In terms of average numbers of clients per week that the food bank respondents were managing, 10 out of 28 respondents noted they were serving an average of 0-20 clients on a weekly basis. Six noted their figure as 21-50 and seven gave their figure as 51-100 clients per week. Five gave their figure as in excess of 100 clients per week.

## *Survey*

The survey covered a number of different topics including:

- provision of feminine hygiene products / how they are supplied
- donations of products / who donates products
- demand and take up of products.

- 2.9 The survey consisted of a variety of closed questions in order to collect quantitative data from across the food banks that responded. Most questions had single selection responses; others offered respondents the choice of selecting multiple response options.
- 2.10 In addition to this, the survey included a number of open ended questions where respondents could reply with their own thoughts and feelings about the topics raised. This was to enable us to obtain qualitative information and build a richer picture of the experience of are those volunteering and working at food banks as well as their thoughts and perceptions on period poverty.
- 2.11 The Survey was constructed on the survey software “Questback” and was live for respondents to answer for two weeks with an extension of an extra week to maximise the response rate between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2018. The questionnaire is available in [Annex A](#).

### 3 Findings

#### Provision of feminine hygiene products

- 3.1 Of the 28 respondents, all 28 reported supplying feminine hygiene products. Awareness of period poverty was cited as the main prompt for having begun to supply these items (21 out of 28), with demand from customers the second most cited reason (15 out of 28) and offers of supplies the third (13 out of 28). One food bank reported how volunteers themselves had raised awareness to a food bank manager about the issue and this was a reason for products beginning to be supplied.
- 3.2 Respondents were asked about the process of how those visiting the food bank can obtain feminine hygiene products in terms of whether these are offered or requested and 21 out of the 28 respondents reported that feminine hygiene products are *offered* to people who use the food bank. Of the remaining seven, two stated that the products are provided universally as standard, another two stated they are provided on request and three provided alternative answers. These included *“request and offer”*, *“If a lady is referred for toiletries we offer them”* and *“Issued on a “help yourself” basis”*.
- 3.3 Respondents were asked to elaborate on the process within their food bank of how items are offered or able to be requested. Qualitative responses were analysed in terms of prominent themes that emerged from the details food banks supplied about their processes.
- 3.4 Across the 21 food banks that stated they *offer* the items, it was reported that staff at a number of sites will directly ask customers if they have a requirement for feminine hygiene products and offer them when customers do (15 out of 21). Some indicated that customers are asked if they need products if they are *female* and deemed of an *“appropriate”* age to require them. However a number of respondents (9 out of 21) didn't refer to the gender of their customers in their answer and indicate that if they are aware of females within the wider family of a customer then they would be asked if sanitary items are something that is needed. Other respondents also noted that they are aware that fathers may require items for female family members and another stated that every person who visits may have a

female in the household who requires the products. In these cases it appears that feminine hygiene products are generally being offered on a more universal basis. Of our 28 responses, 22 food banks reported that they encounter people requesting products on behalf of their partners or other family members.<sup>4</sup>

- 3.5 Ten food banks responded that they provide items just as part of a toiletry pack consisting of other toiletries e.g. toothpaste / soap and 13 responded that they are supplied as a pack of feminine hygiene products (e.g. sanitary towels / tampons). Five reported that they supply the products in both ways. All respondents reported that their food bank supplies sanitary towels and all reported supplying tampons with the exception of two. None reported supplying menstrual cups or any other alternative form of sanitary wear. A majority of respondents stated that they give people a choice of which products they would like. Only four food banks reported that people were not offered a choice of products.
- 3.6 Food banks were asked about any practical arrangements they had made on site to help with providing of feminine hygiene products. This was so we could try and understand the practical implications of providing these products. A majority of respondents (24 out of 28) said they had taken steps to ensure privacy and dignity of customers. Half of respondents had arranged extra storage to provide items (14 out of 28). Work to source donations was mentioned by nine food banks and training of volunteers mentioned by four. A few respondents reported keeping information on how many and which products are distributed, however a majority (24 out of 28) did not.

### **Feedback from customers**

- 3.7 Overall, 12 respondents highlighted that they had received some form of feedback from customers in regards to their provision of feminine hygiene products. A further two stated they didn't know if feedback had been received. Of the 12 who said they had received feedback, 10 reported that customers express gratefulness or a sense of relief upon receiving the products. One food bank mentioned that they felt that providing the products had *"helped to avoid embarrassment"* with another stating

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<sup>4</sup> The experiences of trans men and non binary people in regards to menstruation was not the focus of this research and was not raised by the respondents.

that they were able to provide reassurance that the facility would still be there if someone required it in future:

*“Mostly thanks and sometimes asking if they can come again if it is needed. We always say yes.”*

### **Donations**

- 3.8 All 28 food banks that responded to our survey receive donations of feminine hygiene products. These donations were reported as being supplied by members of the public by 25 out of the 28 food banks. Charities were cited by four of the respondents and feminine hygiene product producers cited by one.
- 3.9 Overall, 16 respondents stated that they hadn't made any requests for donations of feminine hygiene products. The remaining 12 said they had made requests for donations or include feminine hygiene products as an item which can be donated as part of their donation information. Respondents were asked who they had made these requests to and the most frequently reported outlet for requesting donations from was supermarkets or shops such as chemists (6 out of 12). Social media was also mentioned by a small number of food banks as a way to reach out more widely for donations with local groups and charities also mentioned. These requests for donations were on the whole reported as being successful by 11 sites with the remaining one stating they were sometimes successful.

### **Demand / Take up**

- 3.10 In total, 25 respondents stated that they hadn't taken steps to collect information on whether there is a demand for feminine hygiene products amongst their customers. Of the three that stated they had, two felt that supply was adequate to meet demand with the remaining one food bank stating that sometimes demand outweighs supply.
- 3.11 All food banks were asked to describe what they felt the levels of demand and take up of feminine hygiene products are in their food bank. In response to this question, 21 food banks described "high" or "some" demand for feminine hygiene products at their food bank. Three indicated that there is low demand and the remaining four stated that the products are provided as standard universally and therefore the demand for these products couldn't be commented upon.

- 3.12 Of all respondents, 23 food banks described there being “high” or “some” take up of feminine hygiene products at their food bank. Three couldn’t comment on the take up as they stated the products were provided as standard universally. Only two described the take up as “low” at their food bank.
- 3.13 Overall across a majority of responses (17) the level of demand matched take up (e.g. “high” demand and “high” take up). However, four food banks described their situation as having “some” demand but a corresponding “high” take up.
- 3.14 Across the three remaining food banks a mismatch between demand and take-up was reported. One noted a “high” demand with “some” take up, another noted a low demand with “some” take up and the final one stated that products are offered universally and there was a high take up.

#### **Further feedback from food banks**

- 3.15 All respondents were asked if there were any further comments they would like to make on the issue of period poverty before they completed the survey. This was in a free text response format to allow a full explanation of their points in their own words. Thematic analysis was carried out to identify any recurring themes that emerged from the free text feedback.
- 3.16 One theme that emerged from the thematic analysis is that of donations and the link between these and the recent media attention that the issue of poverty has been receiving. Some respondents noted that they felt there had been an increase in the regularity or amount of products being donated because of more extensive media coverage.

*“We have many sanitary products donated mostly because of period poverty being in the media.”*

*“Since Women’s Hour highlighted the issue some time ago we have regular donations which come from the same ladies who want to help.”*

*“The general public over the few years or so, since the ‘I, Daniel Blake’ film, have become much more aware of the need to donate toiletries (sanitary products) and have responded well with a larger donation of such items.”*

3.17 Another theme that emerged from the feedback was that of sanitary provision in schools. Anecdotal evidence of girls in school being in need of donations of feminine hygiene products and other forms of toiletries was put forward by some respondents.

*“The demand for sanitary products in the local high school has been astonishing; we have learned that this is normal practice for teachers to be regularly buying products for pupils either out of school funds or their own money.”*

*“At present we also keep the two local High Schools supplied with towels and tampons for giving to girls who are unable to supply their own so that they do not need to miss time at school.”*

*“...personal care products like soap and deodorant need to be supplied with the sanitary products. I have talked to clients whose children are too embarrassed to attend school or work due to these issues. I have been allocated a part of our stores to store these products so now I need to have a more steady supply for all the Centres.”*

3.18 Although these comments provide a useful insight, it is beyond the scope of the current research to comment further on the issues which they highlight. However the extent and type of role which schools are playing in ameliorating the effects of period poverty (and indeed poverty more widely) seem worthy of further research.

## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1 This report is based on a small sample of food banks in Wales; however it provides a valuable insight into the current work of food banks in the area of period poverty. Overall, all of the respondents to the survey reported supplying feminine hygiene products to their food bank customers and these are on the whole, offered to people who visit the food bank, as opposed to customers needing to request items.
- 4.2 Of those who offer the items, there was an indication that generally food banks will *directly ask* customers whether or not they require feminine hygiene products. A number of sites demonstrated awareness that it may not just be female customers who require these as there are cases where products are required by female members of a household on whose behalf a male has visited the food bank.
- 4.3 Half of respondents stated they hadn't received feedback from customers in regards to the provision of feminine hygiene products, but a proportion did (12 out of 28). Overall, the main themes of the feedback received centred around feelings of relief from customers that the service was available. Donations of items were reported from all 28 respondents with a majority of these coming from members of the public. Donation requests had been made by 16 respondents and these were predominantly made to supermarkets or shops such as chemists; these requests were largely successful.
- 4.4 "High" and "some" demand of feminine hygiene products was reported by 21 food banks with a further three indicating that there is low demand and the remaining four stating that the products are provided as standard universally. A similar picture for take-up was reported, 23 food banks described "high" or "some" take up of feminine hygiene with a further three unable to comment on the take up as they stated the products were provided as standard universally and only two described the take up as "low".
- 4.5 The free-text responses were insightful and highlighted two predominant themes around the issue of period poverty. The first of these was donations and the link between these and the recent media attention that period poverty has been receiving. Some respondents felt that media coverage had recently bolstered the number of donations. The second was sanitary provision in schools and the effect

that respondents feel period poverty is having on school pupils. This was mainly based on anecdotal evidence of incidences that the respondents had heard of. These two themes were beyond the scope of this research to explore in more detail, but future work could possibly involve more in-depth qualitative research in order to gain a fuller picture of these themes and the wider effects of period poverty beyond food banks.

- 4.6 It is important to note that although this is a relatively small-scale piece of research, it has provided an initial insight into some of the issues surrounding period poverty that users of Trussel Trust food banks in Wales are experiencing. It seems likely that these issues are being faced more widely by people in Wales who are in poverty, but it is beyond the scope of the current research to be able to draw a firm conclusion on this.

## 5 References

[Beck et al \(2016\), Mapping the growth of the Welsh Food Bank Landscape 1998-2015](#)

[Channel 4 News, Fact Check. 2018. Period poverty is real. But the average woman isn't spending £500 a year on menstruation](#)

[GOV.UK. 2018. Women and girls set to benefit from £15 million Tampon Tax Fund](#)

[Plan UK. 2018. \*Plan International UK's research on period poverty and stigma\*](#)

[Scottish Government, 2018. Providing Free Sanitary Products](#)

[Trussell Trust. 2017. Non-food provision' in The Trussell Trust Network in Scotland](#)

[Trussell Trust. What We Do The Trussell Trust partners with local communities to help stop](#)

[UK hunger](#)

[Trussell Trust. End of year stats 2017-2018](#)

[Welsh Government. 2018. £1 to tackle period poverty and dignity](#)  
[Accessed 25 September 2018].

## Annex A

Welsh Government is asking a number of food banks in Wales about the issue of 'period poverty' (where their customers are unable to access feminine hygiene products due to cost).

We would like to know more about the prevalence of period poverty and how this matter is currently being addressed by food banks in Wales. The information you provide us with will remain anonymous, no respondent or food bank will be identified in the final report produced by Welsh Government, but the information you provide will help Welsh Government to further understand the issue and how to respond to it.

### Firstly, we'd like to ask some questions about your food bank:

<b>Area of Wales in which you operate</b>	
<b>Average number of clients per week</b>	
<b>Do you have background information on the circumstances that have brought your customers to your food bank?</b>	

### Provision

We appreciate that the issue of period poverty can be a sensitive one.

It would be helpful to know whether your food bank provides feminine hygiene products to your customers.

Do you supply feminine hygiene products at your food banks?

- Yes
- No

If no, why is this? (Tick all that apply)

- We have no demand for feminine hygiene products
- We cannot source supplies of feminine hygiene products at all

- We cannot source supplies of feminine hygiene products that customers want
- Other

If yes, what prompted you to provide feminine hygiene products? (Tick all that apply)

- Demand from customers
- Offers of supplies
- Awareness of Period Poverty
- Other

How do you supply feminine hygiene products?

- On request from customers
- They are offered to customers
- They are provided as standard universally
- Other – Can you outline the process

If the products are supplied on request – can you outline how the request process works (i.e. what would a person need to do to get the products)

If the products are offered, can you outline the process of how they are offered by your food bank?

Do you ever encounter people requesting these items on behalf of their partners / other family members e.g. grand parents / parents on behalf of their grandchildren / children or men / women requesting on behalf of their partners?

Are they provided as: (Tick all that apply)

- A single item
- Pack of towels / tampons
- As part of a wider toiletry pack

What feminine hygiene products do you provide? (Please tick all that apply)

- Tampons
- Sanitary towels
- Menstrual Cup
- Other (please state)

Do you offer customers a choice of feminine hygiene product?

- Yes
- No

Have you made any special arrangements so that you can provide feminine hygiene products? (Please tick all that apply) Such as:

- Extra storage
- Work to source donations of products
- Training of volunteers
- Steps to ensure privacy and dignity of customers
- Other
- None of the above

Do you keep information about how many and which products are distributed? (e.g. keep track of numbers of items distributed)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- If yes, can you provide these details?

If you do not offer feminine hygiene products to your customers, is this something that you are planning to do in the future?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If there is anything that prevents you from providing this service, please tell us more about this below:

Have you received any feedback from your customers on the provision of feminine hygiene products?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If yes, what feedback have you received?

## **Demand**

There is very limited information about the extent of 'period poverty' in Wales. It would be helpful to know:

Have you taken steps to collect information on whether there is a demand for feminine hygiene products amongst your customers?

- Yes
- No

If yes, do you know whether demand is greater than the supply of products?

How would you describe the take up of feminine hygiene products at your food bank?

- High take up
- Some take up
- Low take up
- N/A - Products offered universally

How would you describe the demand for feminine hygiene products in your food bank?

- High demand
- Some demand
- Low demand
- No demand
- N/A - Products offered universally

## **Donations**

Do you receive donations of feminine hygiene products?

- Yes
- No

If yes, who donates the products?

- Charities
- Feminine hygiene product producer
- Members of the public
- Other

Have you made a request for donations of feminine hygiene products?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Other

If yes, to who have you made the request?

Were you successful?

**Are there any other points you would like to raise on the issue of period poverty?**

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey**