



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

REPORT, DOCUMENT

Period Proud Wales Action Plan: annual highlight report 2023 to 2024

Summary of what we have done during 2023 and 2024 to end period poverty and achieve period dignity in Wales.

First published: 7 March 2024

Last updated: 7 March 2024

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Current position

It's 1 year since we published our [Period Proud Wales Action Plan](#). The plan sets out our ambitions to eradicate period poverty and ensure period dignity for women, girls and people who have periods by 2027. This annual highlight report will detail the work being undertaken on the implementation of the Period Proud Wales plan.

Achievements

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

The Welsh Government provides funding to local authorities to make free period products available within schools and communities. Funding is also provided to Further Education colleges for the same purpose. For the financial year 2023 to 2024, we were able to retain last year's cost-of living uplift to the grant which has continued to strengthen local authorities' response to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on period poverty. Universities are increasing the availability of period dignity and personal hygiene products for students, including both reusable and single use products across all campuses and buildings. Links have been established with period dignity leads and food partnerships to work collaboratively on the offer support for products in communities.

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

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to the provision of period products across Wales

M.E.L Research were awarded the contract to undertake an **evaluation of the Period Dignity Grant** in November 2022. The final report was published on 26 October. Officials are now considering how to implement the recommendations. One of the recommendations was to include administration costs for local authorities and this has already been implemented for the current financial year.

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

Officials within the Health and Well-being Curriculum branch are finalising a draft specification to commission menstrual well-being curriculum resources. It is hoped the specification will be published by March 2024. For the Financial Year 2023 to 2024 Period Dignity Grant, the Welsh Government retained the ability for local authorities to spend up to 20% of the grant on training and education for learners, teachers and community members. For the mid-year claims submitted, 10 local authorities used the funding on training and after completing mid-year monitoring meetings, we expect this figure to increase.

We were successful in including 2 questions related to access to period products within the School Health Research survey. This will provide us with more robust data to monitor how many schools are accessing free period provision through the grant, how this could be improved, and if students are accessing products in a way which promotes period dignity.

Action 4: work with our trade unions, public services, private and third sectors to create guidance and promote

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policies on period dignity and the menopause and to ensure educational and practical period dignity resources are available

Business Wales has promoted the new menstruation, menstrual health, and menopause in the workplace' standard, published by the British Standards Institute on the Business Wales website. Period Dignity and Social Partnership and Fair Work officials have met with the Wales TUC to discuss how to progress this action with trade unions.

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

The Welsh Government have completed the review of their guidance having benchmarked against the revised Civil Service Human Resources guidance and the **Menstrual and menopausal health in the workplace** standard. Following this benchmarking exercise and engagement with stakeholders, the Welsh Government Menopause guidance has had some amendments and now includes additional content on wider period dignity and menstrual health matters.

As part of this work, the Women Together staff network undertook a survey of their members to find out about experiences of colleagues across the organisation. After analysing their findings, the network made a number of recommendations for the Welsh Government to take forward, including providing menopause awareness training for line managers, raising the profile of workplace adjustments and passports, and ensuring recruitment and promotion processes take menopause symptoms into account.

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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

For the 2023 to 2024 financial year, we have increased the minimum requirement for grant spend on eco-friendly period products (i.e., re-usable and/or plastic free) to 70%. For the mid-year claims submitted under the Period Dignity Grant, 91% was spent on eco-friendly products.

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

In Round 4 of the Wales and Africa small grant scheme, one proposal was successful related to period dignity. Chomuzangari Women's Cooperative

Project in Zimbabwe. The project aims to provide a much-needed products and capacity building training to improve the health and well-being of women and girls, while also providing employment opportunities and reducing the environmental impact of disposable pads.

For Round 5 of the grant, an additional £90,000 was ringfenced for this award focussing on contributing to gender equality including period dignity. Applications from Round 5 of the Wales and Africa grant scheme were considered by an expert panel on 19 January 2024. This round was specifically intended for women's empowerment projects in either Uganda or Lesotho. The following 2 organisations have been awarded funding for their projects Care for Uganda, and Teams4U which will provide training support on menstrual health, distributing reusable sanitary pads and creating period-friendly schools.

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

The Deputy Minister for Social Partnership [met with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board \(BCUHB\) service leads](#), the Equality group at BCUHB, and community groups from North Wales to discuss the needs of LGBTQ+ people in health.

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

Period Dignity and Unpaid Carers officials are working to raise awareness among carers organisations and networks of the Period Dignity Grant and how products can be accessed. A review is taking place to check what information third sector carers organisations have on their websites regarding their grant.

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

Period Dignity Officials have been meeting with SportWales and 2 workshops have been arranged for April 2024. Over 20 different national sporting bodies in Wales will be invited to progress this action further. We submitted a request to the Health and Care Research (HCRW) to undertake a rapid evidence review to examine existing evidence in relation to the impact of periods on participation in

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sports. We were successful with our request and the work will start in April 2024.

Forward look

- Continue to 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.
- Working with Period Dignity Leads and Further Education colleagues on the recommendations from the evaluation of the Period Dignity Grant.
- The Welsh Government to develop menopause awareness training; building a resource hub and launching a refresh of the period and menopause guidance.
- Increase the percentage spend on eco-friendly period products to 75% for the Financial Year 2024 to 2025, with an aim to achieve a target of 90 to 100% of period products purchased through the grant being eco-friendly by 2025 to 2026 financial year.
- 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.
- 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.

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