



Department
of Health &
Social Care

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28 FEB 2019

Our ref: TO-1165726

Ms Andrea Woodside
Principal Governance Officer
The Democracy Service
Civic Centre 3
Huddersfield HD1 2TG

Dear Ms Woodside,

Thank you for your correspondence of 28 January to Matt Hancock about period dignity. I have been asked to reply.

I appreciate Kirklees Council's concerns about the cost of sanitary products for disadvantaged women and girls. Sanitary protection is a necessity for women's personal hygiene.

The Government believes, however, that it is more appropriate to help women, including girls from lower-income families, with their general cost of living through measures such as Income Support, Tax Credits or Universal Credit. As you will be aware, these are matters for HM Treasury and the Department for Work and Pensions.

The Department funds research on health and social care through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The usual practice of NIHR is not to ring-fence funds for expenditure on particular topics, rather research proposals in all areas compete for the funding available.

There are currently no projects or studies being undertaken on inadequate sanitary protection.

However, the NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of health. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition,

with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality. In all disease areas, the amount of NIHR funding depends on the volume and quality of scientific activity.

Finally, you may be aware that the 'Tampon Tax Fund' allocates funds generated from the VAT on sanitary products to projects to improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



AS Sophie Stuart
Ministerial Correspondence and Public Enquiries