



Access to Menstrual Hygiene Products for the Vulnerable

Canadian Results

28 May 2018

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**CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**

Background and objective

- Women who are homeless or live on limited income face many difficulties such as finding shelter, a safe place to sleep for the night, and food. However, once a month, they face an additional stressor that is even more difficult to manage living on the margins: dealing with their menstrual cycle. For women in such circumstances the limited resources means making trade-offs and sacrifices when it comes to staying healthy and clean during their cycle. Women may use everything from toilet paper to socks to newspapers, forego food or public transit, or steal in order to get access to menstrual product supplies (Mathieu, 2017).
- In 2016, New York City passed Bills 1122-A, 1123-A, and 1128-A, which guaranteed access to essential feminine hygiene products for all female department of correction inmates, persons residing in a city shelter and youth under the care of certain Children's Services facilities, and public school students (City of New York, 2016).
- **Objective of this study:** to gain a sense of the magnitude of the problem in Canada and what it may cost to have a policy that solves it. Assumptions at the end of this deck.

Policies considered

- Two policies were considered:
 - Policy 1 “Vulnerable girls and women”: Includes:
 - Female shelter users
 - School age population (standard low income measure households)
 - Policy 2 “Limited Circumstances & all schools”: Consistent with recent NYC legislation
 - Female Shelter Users
 - Average Number of Female Incarcerated Population
 - All school age population

Key findings: Sanitary support of vulnerable girls & women

- Policy 1: The Canadian results of a policy to provide sanitary products to vulnerable girls and women are:
 - Over 204,000 menstruators would be helped, , broken down in the following proportions:
 - 13.2% Female Shelter Users
 - 86.8% school age in low income circumstances
 - Those helped is expected to grow by 11% over the next 10 years
 - Up to 68 million disposable menstrual hygiene products would be used under the policy
 - The total annual expected cost of the program is \$18 million
 - \$15 million for sanitary products (range from +\$13M to \$26M)
 - \$3M distribution/administration (20% assumed)
 - Average annual total cost per person helped is \$87

Key findings: Sanitary support of girls and women in limited circumstances & all schools

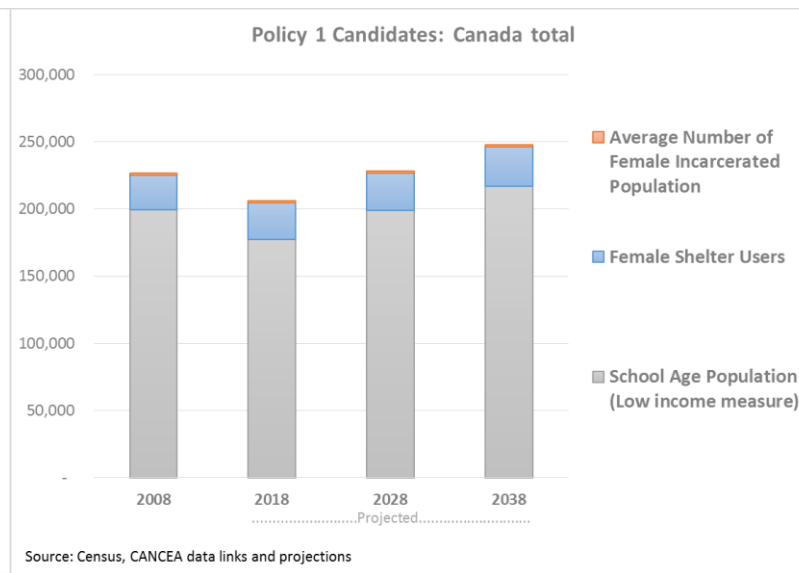
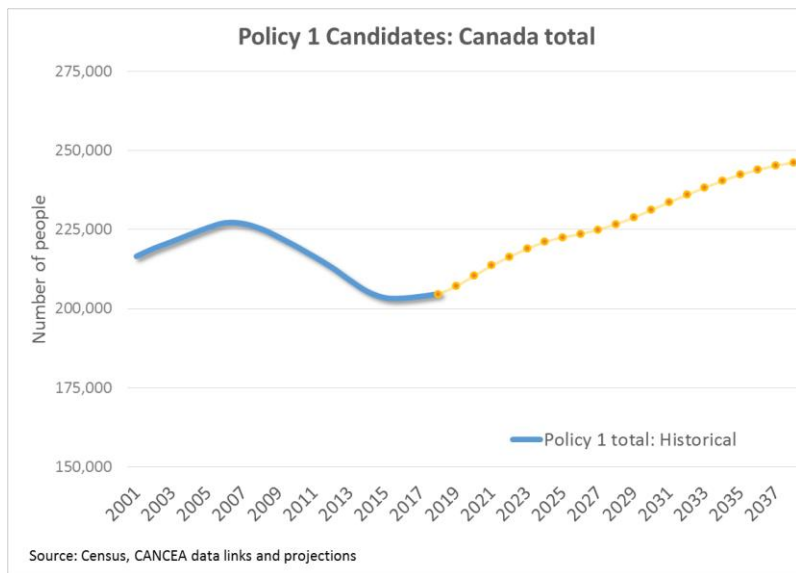
- Policy 2: The Canadian results of a policy to provide sanitary products to girls and women in limited circumstances & all schools are:
 - Over 882,000 menstruators would be supported, broken down in the following proportions:
 - 3.1% Female Shelter Users
 - 20.2% school age in low income circumstances
 - 0.2% average number of female incarcerated population
 - 76.6% addition for school age population from any income family
 - Those helped is expected to grow by 12% over the next 10 years
 - Up to 290 million disposable menstrual hygiene products could be used under the policy
 - The total annual expected cost of the program is \$77 million
 - \$72 million for sanitary products (range from +\$65M to \$105M)
 - \$5M distribution/administration (20% assumed)
 - Average annual total cost per person supported \$87

Results: Number of girls & women supported across Canada

Candidate females 2018

	Female Shelter Users	School Age Population (Low income measure)	Total Policy 1: Vulnerable girls and women	Average Number of Female Incarcerated Population	Addition for School Age Population from any income family	Total Policy 2: Limited Circumstances & all schools
Canada	27,017	177,586	204,603	1,431	675,104	881,137
Ontario	10,641	75,626	86,267 42%	561	266,752	353,018 40%
Quebec	5,882	33,023	38,905 19%	313	141,423	180,328 20%
British Columbia	3,543	25,853	29,396 14%	187	85,531	114,927 13%
Alberta	3,403	15,949	19,352 9%	182	84,369	103,721 12%
Manitoba	1,001	8,160	9,162 4%	53	28,534	37,695 4%
Saskatchewan	848	5,670	6,518 3%	45	24,340	30,858 4%
Nova Scotia	652	5,025	5,678 3%	34	16,096	21,774 2%
New Brunswick	494	4,240	4,734 2%	26	13,281	18,015 2%
Newfoundland and Labrador	350	2,442	2,791 1%	19	9,226	12,018 1%
Prince Edward Island	103	882	985 0%	5	2,815	3,800 0%
Nunavut	31	285	316 0%	2	1,090	1,406 0%
Northwest Territories	37	258	295 0%	2	986	1,281 0%
Yukon	31	173	204 0%	2	661	865 0%

Source: Census, CANCEA data links and projections



Results: Product use estimates

Total Expected Product Usage: Candidate females

	Female Shelter Users	School Age Population (Low income measure)	Total Policy 1: Vulnerable girls and women	Average Number of Female Incarcerated Population	Addition for School Age Population from any income family	Total Policy 2: Limited Circumstances & all schools
Canada	8,915,441	58,602,869	67,518,310	472,090	222,782,331	290,772,731
Ontario	3,511,496	24,956,251	28,467,747	185,238	88,027,291	116,495,038
Quebec	1,941,129	10,897,481	12,838,610	103,201	46,669,290	59,507,900
British Columbia	1,169,169	8,531,461	9,700,630	61,703	28,225,040	37,925,670
Alberta	1,122,831	5,263,247	6,386,078	60,222	27,841,692	34,227,770
Manitoba	330,362	2,692,934	3,023,296	17,333	9,415,986	12,439,282
Saskatchewan	279,929	1,870,936	2,150,866	14,845	8,032,207	10,183,072
Nova Scotia	215,193	1,658,392	1,873,585	11,333	5,311,615	7,185,200
New Brunswick	163,077	1,399,139	1,562,215	8,581	4,382,540	5,944,756
Newfoundland and Labrador	115,377	805,769	921,146	6,115	3,044,639	3,965,785
Prince Edward Island	34,095	291,016	325,111	1,790	928,944	1,254,055
Nunavut	10,268	94,069	104,337	533	359,596	463,933
Northwest Territories	12,309	85,108	97,417	652	325,340	422,757
Yukon	10,204	57,067	67,271	543	218,150	285,421

Source: Census, CANCEA data links and projections

Results: Expected cost of policies

Total Expected Cost (constant prices, 2018): Candidate females (incl. cost of product with 20% overhead)

	Female Shelter Users	School Age Population (Low income measure)	Total Policy 1: Vulnerable girls and women	Average Number of Female Incarcerated Population	Addition for School Age Population from any income family	Total Policy 2: Limited Circumstances & all schools
Canada	\$2,353,676	\$15,471,157	\$17,824,834	\$124,632	\$58,814,535	\$76,764,001
Ontario	\$927,035	\$6,588,450	\$7,515,485	\$48,903	\$23,239,205	\$30,754,690
Quebec	\$512,458	\$2,876,935	\$3,389,393	\$27,245	\$12,320,693	\$15,710,086
British Columbia	\$308,661	\$2,252,306	\$2,560,966	\$16,290	\$7,451,411	\$10,012,377
Alberta	\$296,427	\$1,389,497	\$1,685,925	\$15,899	\$7,350,207	\$9,036,131
Manitoba	\$87,216	\$710,935	\$798,150	\$4,576	\$2,485,820	\$3,283,970
Saskatchewan	\$73,901	\$493,927	\$567,828	\$3,919	\$2,120,503	\$2,688,331
Nova Scotia	\$56,811	\$437,815	\$494,626	\$2,992	\$1,402,266	\$1,896,893
New Brunswick	\$43,052	\$369,373	\$412,425	\$2,265	\$1,156,991	\$1,569,415
Newfoundland and Labrador	\$30,460	\$212,723	\$243,183	\$1,614	\$803,785	\$1,046,967
Prince Edward Island	\$9,001	\$76,828	\$85,829	\$473	\$245,241	\$331,071
Nunavut	\$2,711	\$24,834	\$27,545	\$141	\$94,933	\$122,478
Northwest Territories	\$3,250	\$22,468	\$25,718	\$172	\$85,890	\$111,608
Yukon	\$2,694	\$15,066	\$17,760	\$143	\$57,592	\$75,351

Source: Census, CANCEA data links and projections

Projections

Candidate females	2008	2018	2028	2038	Expected 10yr change
Female Shelter Users	25,849	27,017	27,741	28,995	3%
School Age Population (Low income measure)	199,369	177,586	198,945	217,115	12%
Total (policy 1)	225,218	204,603	226,686	246,110	11%
Average Number of Female Incarcerated Population	1,354	1,431	1,464	1,521	2%
Addition for School Age Population from any income family	755,870	675,104	762,224	833,073	13%
Total (policy 2)	982,441	881,137	990,374	1,080,705	12%

Source: Census, CANCEA data links and projections

Total Expected Product Usage: Candidate females	2008	2018	2028	2038
Female Shelter Users	8,529,956	8,915,441	9,154,369	9,568,397
School Age Population (Low income measure)	65,791,382	58,602,869	65,651,283	71,647,295
Total (policy 1)	74,321,338	67,518,310	74,805,651	81,215,692
Average Number of Female Incarcerated Population	446,688	472,090	483,236	501,982
Addition for School Age Population from any income family	249,434,973	222,782,331	251,531,944	274,911,967
Total (policy 2)	323,756,311	290,300,641	326,337,595	356,127,659

Source: Census, CANCEA data links and projections

Total Expected Cost (constant prices, 2018): Candidate females (incl. cost of product with	2008	2018	2028	2038
Female Shelter Users	\$2,251,908	\$2,353,676	\$2,416,753	\$2,526,057
School Age Population (Low income measure)	\$17,368,925	\$15,471,157	\$17,331,939	\$18,914,886
Total (policy 1)	\$19,620,833	\$17,824,834	\$19,748,692	\$21,440,943
Average Number of Female Incarcerated Population	\$117,926	\$124,632	\$127,574	\$132,523
Addition for School Age Population from any income family	\$65,850,833	\$58,814,535	\$66,404,433	\$72,576,759
Total (policy 2)	\$85,471,666	\$76,639,369	\$86,153,125	\$94,017,702

Source: Census, CANCEA data links and projections

Key assumptions

- Population subgroups to consider:
 - Female population between 11 and under 18
 - Female shelter population between 18 and under 50
 - Population under 18 is already captured in the total student population between 11 and under 18 in the first group
 - Female incarcerated population between 18 and under 50
 - Population under 18 is captured in the total population between 11 and under 18 in the first group
- Menses incidence and durations
- The average cycle is 28 days long
- Most females menses for 2–7 days during their first menses
- Midcycle bleeding occurs in 4.8% of women. Three days.

Key assumptions

- Percent of women categorized by light, medium, or heavy bleeding per calendar day of menses

Percent of women	Percent of women in			Percent of women in	
	Heavy	Medium	Light	menses	menses (adjusted for midcycle bleeding)
Day 1	41%	36%	23%	100%	4.8%
Day 2	58%	30%	12%	99%	4.8%
Day 3	40%	38%	22%	98%	4.8%
Day 4	23%	37%	40%	93%	
Day 5	3%	24%	73%	69%	
Day 6	2%	5%	93%	37%	
Day 7	1%	2%	97%	18%	
Female hygiene product use per day	6.8	4.9	3.0		



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