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ECB and Initial announce partnership to support period dignity in recreational cricket

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and Initial Washroom Hygiene (Initial) have today announced a strategic partnership, designed to bring period dignity to grassroots cricket.

Central to this new partnership is a shared ambition to ensure that menstruation is not something that holds back women and girls from being involved in sports.

Utilising Initial's extensive research and expertise in helping to ensure period dignity, In Cubicle Period Dignity Dispensers will be supplied to grassroots clubs with girls' sections, along with the servicing of period waste bins.

These dispensers provide free and discreet access to period products within the toilet cubicle, so crucially for those who menstruate, at the point of need. A pilot programme will shortly be underway in Derbyshire, with the support of the Derbyshire Cricket Foundation, before being rolled out across England and Wales.

With values that strongly align around respect, inclusivity, breaking down taboos, and keeping girls involved in sports, education will also play a key role in the partnership between ECB and Initial.

The ECB is looking to involve all Women's and Girls' Cricket Development Officers from across England and Wales on this important journey. Educational material is being developed to help ensure menstrual cycle taboos are a thing of the past, alongside portable "dignity bags" for cricket coaches, as another way of making period products easily accessible.

The drive to lower barriers to entry for women and girls in cricket is part of the game's efforts to become as inclusive as possible. It comes off the back of the formation of the Women's Health Group – a group that includes medical experts and cricketers – which is surveying players and researching women's health in sport to help improve the health, wellbeing, and physical performance of women's cricketers.

Tammy Beaumont, England Women's cricketer and a member of the Women's Health Group, said: "We want as many girls and women as possible to feel that cricket is a game for them - and in order to do that we need to ensure that everyone is comfortable, and everyone feels supported.

"With the LV= Insurance Women's Ashes Test match getting started this week at Trent Bridge, in which we'll be wearing white, it's the perfect time to reaffirm the game's commitment to period dignity. As England players, we're very happy wearing white when we play Test cricket. Our game is different to football and rugby in that it's essential we wear white when using a hard, red ball from a visibility point of view.

“Whether you’re playing at club level or for England, you shouldn’t need to worry about anything other than your performance and enjoying yourself. Being on ‘your period’ shouldn’t hold anyone back from participating in and having the confidence to enjoy cricket and hopefully, this partnership will help deliver on that.”

Initial, Jill Rodgers, Area Marketing Director for the UK, Ireland, Baltics & SSA said: “We believe that everyone who menstruates has the right to period dignity, and having access to free period products in the toilet cubicle, plays a crucial part in this.

“Our own research* has shown the overwhelming majority of those who menstruate (94%) would like to see feminine hygiene provisions supplied in the actual toilet cubicle. No girl or woman wants to be caught unawares and without access to the products they need, in the place they need them.”

ENDS

About the research methodology

*Opinion Matters undertook the research on behalf of Rentokil Initial in July 2021. The survey sample was 2,000 UK females aged 12-54.

About ECB

The ECB is the national governing body for the whole of cricket in England and Wales. It runs successful Men’s, Women’s, and Disability England teams, oversees domestic and recreational cricket and runs participation programmes that get children active and playing cricket. Through cricket, the ECB wants to improve lives and connect communities.

About Initial

2023 marks 120 years that we have proudly been setting the standard for hygiene by helping to deliver Washroom Dignity, and safer work, public and leisure spaces across the UK.

For further information, please visit www.initial.co.uk

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