



ACCREDITATION SANS FRONTIÈRES

Patient Voice Toolkit

Patient Voice Council — Secretariat Impartiality Undertaking

*The written commitment the secretariat gives to each council and each facility: independence,
impartiality, informality, confidentiality*

Version 1 · 2026

Paris · Geneva · Tbilisi

Document Control

Document Title	Patient Voice Council — Secretariat Impartiality Undertaking
Document Reference	ASF-PV-SECRETARIAT-001-v1
Version / Edition	Version 1
Status	Published
Date of Publication	13 September 2026
Place of Publication	Paris, France
Issuing Authority	ASF International Standards Council, Accréditation Sans Frontières
Language of Origin	English
Effective Date	13 September 2026
Next Scheduled Review	13 September 2028
Supersedes	None — first edition

Free to reuse. This document is published in full by Accréditation Sans Frontières and may be adapted by any organization establishing a patient council in its own country, with attribution and a note of what was changed. It forms part of the Patient Voice Toolkit, all of which is available at france-asf.fr/patient-voice.

Table of Contents

Foreword

1. Undertaking
2. Independence
3. Impartiality
4. Informality
5. Confidentiality
6. Diligence
7. Accountability

Annex A — Completed Example

Annex B — Signature Form

References

Index

Foreword

The council works because the person running it is not the hospital and is not the patients. That is a claim, and claims need paper. This undertaking is signed by the secretariat organization and the named secretariat for every council it runs, and a copy is given to every member and to the facility. It draws on the four principles of the International Ombuds Association — independence, impartiality, informality, confidentiality — and on ASF's own Code of Conduct and Independence and Non-Influence Statement.

Where ASF is the secretariat, this undertaking is in addition to, and never weaker than, the ASF Code of Conduct (ASF-CONDUCT-001) and the Independence and Non-Influence Statement (ASF-INDEPENDENCE-001). Where another organization adopts the method, it signs this undertaking as its own.

1. Undertaking

The secretariat organization named in Annex B and the named secretariat undertake, to the Patient Voice Council of the facility named in Annex B and to that facility, as follows.

2. Independence

1. We hold no ownership, governance, employment, supplier or financial relationship with the facility, and will declare and step aside if one arises.
2. No payment we receive is linked to any outcome of any case, decision or report.
3. We are structurally separate from the facility's management: we do not report to it, and it does not direct our work.
4. Where the secretariat organization also provides other paid services to the facility (training, advisory, publishing), those services are delivered by different people, and no such service influences the council's report or record.

3. Impartiality

5. We are neither the patient's advocate nor the facility's agent. We take no side.
6. Both sides are heard before any response is sent and before any account is recorded as fact.
7. A disputed account is recorded as disputed, with both versions. Nothing in the report is removed or softened at the facility's request; facts are checked and the facility's response is added.
8. We treat praise and complaint with the same care.

4. Informality

9. The council is not a legal proceeding and we do not conduct one. We mediate and facilitate; we do not adjudicate, award, or discipline.
10. We tell patients and the facility plainly when a matter needs a formal route — a regulator, ASF's Complaints Policy, the courts — and we help them find it.

5. Confidentiality

11. We disclose no patient's identity to the facility where anonymity was requested, and we tell the patient plainly where anonymity cannot be preserved because the concern would identify them regardless.
12. We publish no individual case. Council records and annual summaries use aggregated, anonymised themes only.
13. We hold personal data under the ASF Data Protection Policy and applicable law, and delete case files three years after closure.
14. We do not discuss council business outside the council, the facility liaison and the patient concerned.

6. Diligence

15. The monthly report is delivered to the facility on the first working day of the month and to the council 48 hours before the meeting.
16. Every patient who raises a concern receives a case number on receipt, an acknowledgement within two working days, and a written answer within five working days of the council meeting.
17. Every action in the log is chased until closed and reported at the following meeting.
18. A named deputy secretariat covers absence, bound by this undertaking.

7. Accountability

A member, a patient or the facility may complain about the secretariat's conduct under the ASF Public Complaints and Feedback Policy (Track 2 — complaints about ASF), which provides for review by someone not involved in the matter. Where the secretariat is not ASF, the adopting organization names an equivalent independent route in Annex B.

Annex A — Completed Example

Illustration only.

Council	Patient Voice Council, Ultra Health Clinic, Tbilisi
Secretariat organization	Accréditation Sans Frontières, 32 Boulevard de Rochechouart, 75018 Paris — Tbilisi office, 3 Betlemi Rise
Named secretariat	Ana Beridze, Patient Voice Coordinator
Deputy	Ioseb Dimitrashvili, Patient Council Coordinator
Declared relationships with the facility	None. ASF Local Advisory Services are not contracted by this facility.
Independent complaint route	ASF Public Complaints and Feedback Policy, Track 2 — france-asf.fr/complaints
Signed	8 April 2026 — for ASF: Dr. Giorgi Pkhakadze, President; named secretariat: A. Beridze

Annex B — Signature Form

Council (facility name, city): _____

Secretariat organization and address: _____

Named secretariat: _____

Deputy: _____

Declared relationships with the facility (or "none"):

Independent complaint route: _____

We give this undertaking to the council and to the facility.

Name:	Name:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

Named secretariat

Name, signature, date: _____

References

- [1] International Ombuds Association. Standards of Practice, v. 2022.
- [2] Accréditation Sans Frontières. Code of Conduct, ASF-CONDUCT-001-v2. Paris: ASF; 2026.
- [3] Accréditation Sans Frontières. Independence and Non-Influence Statement, ASF-INDEPENDENCE-001-v2. Paris: ASF; 2026.
- [4] Accréditation Sans Frontières. Advisory Services Policy, ASF-ADVISORY-001-v1. Paris: ASF; 2026.
- [5] Accréditation Sans Frontières. Public Complaints and Feedback Policy, ASF-COMPLAINTS-001-v2. Paris: ASF; 2026.

Index

Accountability, 7

Anonymity, 5

Deputy, 6

Disputed accounts, 3

Independence, 2

Paid services, separation from, 2

Timelines, 6