

March 25, 2014

Dr. Bartha Maria Knoppers  
Department of Human Genetics  
Centre of Genomics and Policy  
740, Dr Penfield Avenue, Room 5214  
Montreal QC H3A 0G1

  
Dear Dr. Knoppers:

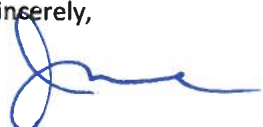
Thank you for your letter of March 10 expressing the views of the Task Force on Ethics reform and copied to the CIHR Institute Advisory Board Ethics Designates. There has been subsequent correspondence from Institute Advisory Board Ethics Designates supporting your letter and so we are copying them on this response.

We understand that you and members of the ethics research community still have concerns with the approach CIHR will be taking to improve leadership on ethics. We propose that the way forward is to work together to ensure that the refreshed CIHR Governing Council Standing Committee on Ethics (SCE) is in fact strong, credible and works to guide CIHR in taking action on the highest priority ethical issues being faced within the research initiatives of our organization. The SCE will hold CIHR to account for leadership and performance in the area of ethics. The SCE will also finalize an action plan that will set out some clear objectives, expectations and means of measuring whether these are being achieved.

It is our intention to more actively engage with the ethics community over the coming years and to better communicate the kinds of work being done throughout our organization. As a first step, we would be pleased to discuss Ethics reforms with members of your community at the upcoming meeting of the Canadian Bioethics Society (May 28-31).

Let us turn the conversation now from how and who demonstrates leadership, to beginning to set our plan of action and discuss those ethical issues that will have the highest impact in areas where health research is rapidly advancing.

Sincerely,

  
Jane E. Aubin, Ph.D.  
Chief Scientific Officer and Vice-President, Research  
and Knowledge Translation

cc: MEMBERS: Daryl Pullman  
Tim Caulfield  
Jim Lavery  
Michael MacDonald

IAB EDs

Aboriginal Peoples' Health – Suzanne Tough

Aging – Ross Upshur

Cancer Research – Ronald Heslegrave

Circulatory and Respiratory Health – Vacant

Gender and Health – Françoise Baylis

Genetics – Vardit Ravitsky

Health Services and Policy Research -- Pascale Lehoux

Human development, Child and Youth Health – Vassilios Papadopoulos

Infection and Immunity – Chris Kaposy

Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis -- Stephen Rabinovitch

Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction – Eric Racine

Nutrition, Metabolism and Diabetes – Amit Garg

Population and Public Health – Angus Dawson

SCE Chair – Lisa Schwartz