

December 23, 2014

Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health

Institute of Aging

Institute of Cancer Research

Institute of Circulatory and Respiratory Health

Institute of Gender and Health

Institute of Genetics

Institute of Health Services and Policy Research

Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health

Institute of Infection and Immunity

Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis

Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction

Institute of Nutrition, Metabolism and Diabetes

Institute of Population and Public Health

Institut de la santé des Autochtones

Institut du vieillissement

Institut du cancer

Institut de la santé circulatoire et respiratoire

Institut de la santé des femmes et des hommes

Institut de génétique

Institut des services et des politiques de la santé

Institut du développement et de la santé des enfants et des adolescents

Institut des maladies infectieuses et immunitaires

Institut de l'appareil locomoteur et de l'arthrite

Institut des neurosciences, de la santé mentale et des toxicomanies

Institut de la nutrition, du métabolisme et du diabète

Institut de la santé publique et des populations

Dr. Ghislaine Cleret de Langavant
President of the Canadian Bioethics Society
561 Rocky Ridge Bay NW
Calgary AB T3G 4E7

Dear Ghislaine:

Thank you very much for your letter dated November 25, 2014, and for our candid phone conversation on December 3, 2014. I agree that a constructive collaboration between CIHR and the Canadian bioethics community is of mutual benefit, and I am committed to continuing to strengthen the collaboration.

As we discussed on the phone, the advice and recommendations of the Task Force were carefully considered by CIHR's Governing Council in the context of our legislated mandate and, as a result, most of the recommendations were accepted. As highlighted in our earlier correspondence and the open forum in which I participated during the 2014 annual meeting of the Canadian Bioethics Society, we all agree that strong leadership is central to CIHR meeting its ethics mandate and ensuring integration of ethics across the organization. In addition to the excellent ethics expertise at CIHR in our Ethics Office and the Tri-Council Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research (SRCR), a refreshed Governing Council Standing Committee on Ethics (SCE) has been established as a key element in CIHR's endeavor to deliver on its ethics mandate. As evident in the call for nominations and subsequent appointments, SCE membership has been broadened to include more external ethics expertise, comprising three national experts, two international experts and two Institute Advisory Board Ethics Designates. The full composition of the committee can be found at <http://www.cihr.gc.ca/e/2859.html>. The SCE's recently approved Terms of Reference can be found at <http://www.cihr.gc.ca/e/48875.html>.

The first meeting of the SCE was held in September 2014. Members participated in frank, open and positive discussions on the path forward for ethics at CIHR. A summary of the key messages stemming from this meeting can be found on our website at <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/48876.html>. At the meeting, ad hoc SCE working groups were established to help move thinking forward around some initial key priority areas. Their work will inform discussions at the next meeting of SCE, which is planned for January 7 and 8, 2015, and we are anticipating further engaged and meaningful dialogue amongst members. Amongst agenda items for the January SCE meeting, I will raise your letter and our phone call, and reiterate my commitment to collaboration with the Canadian Bioethics Society.

I very much look forward to our face-to-face meeting in Montreal on February 5, 2015, and to future open, collegial and engaged discussions with the broader Canadian Bioethics Society membership.

Joyeux Noël, et pour l'année prochaine, le bonheur, la santé et le succès.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane', with a large loop at the beginning and a horizontal line extending to the right.

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