

## Brain Matters 2: Capacity Building for an Ethics Responsive to Patient and Public Needs

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Dear colleagues, participants in Brain Matters 2, and readers of the *Journal of Ethics and Mental Health*,

The power and promises of neuroscience and neurotechnology combined with existing challenges created by the burden of psychiatric and neurological disorders set a formidable agenda for neuroethics and allied efforts. This is, in a nutshell, why Brain Matters 2, an international neuroethics conference hosted in Montréal on May 26-27, 2011 (preceded by a public pre-conference) was convened and subtitled "Ethics in the translation of neuroscience to psychiatric and neurological care". At the onset, we knew our goal overpowered our means but we were also committed to the idea that a crucial and necessary step is to bring scholars and stakeholders from different disciplines, countries, and backgrounds, together, in the same place, to continue sharing their work in synergy. Through open exchange of ideas and sharing of experience, we can learn from each other, progress humbly in identifying important new ethical challenges, and discuss passionately about concrete solutions to tackle these challenges.

As the conference unfolded, we realized that many important issues jeopardize both the development of knowledge and understanding in neurology and mental health and its wise application to improve the wellbeing of patients. However, as this special issue of the *Journal of Ethics and Mental Health* captures, the contributions from the conference clearly demonstrate the tremendous and radical changes which the interdisciplinary field of bioethics has brought in the practice of medicine, science, and the humanities. Building on four decades of innovative bioethics work, we can now propose new healthcare paradigms based on a seamless marriage of the humanities and social sciences with medical and health sciences. We are better tooled than ever before to face the challenges surfacing in neuroscience research and patient care. Our faith in interdisciplinary scholarship and collaborations has yielded fruits, which we can now collectively harvest to help tackle goals in service of the public and patients.

In our eyes, the conference was a tremendous success with participants coming from 10 different countries. There was strong representation and recognition of trainees with prizes and awards, outstanding and diverse scientific content in the pre-conference, oral talks, panels, posters, and plenary lectures. Moreover the moderate conference size allowed intense and high-level discussion and networking. It was indeed a great pleasure for us to organize, support, and host this international conference and we are delighted that a third edition of the conference has

been announced by colleagues at the Cleveland Clinic. This will certainly help the community shaping around the conference series continue its activities and collaborations.

We express our gratitude once again to all those who have made this conference a success; including members of the Local Organizing Committee, members of the International Scientific and Advisory Committee, our generous sponsors, our guest speakers and panellists, the organizers of Brain Matters 1, the IRCM leadership and staff, colleagues who served as reviewers, moderators, judges, and representatives from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec, and finally all those who attended. Readers seeking more information can read the final conference report to better understand the format of the conference, identify recipients of awards as well as its strengths and weaknesses based on the conference evaluation.

*Merci encore une fois à vous tous et bonne lecture!*

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### Reference:

Constance Deslauriers, Nicole Palmour, Eric Racine. 2011. Brain Matters 2 Conference and Pre-conference; 2011, Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal, Montréal, Available at: <http://www.ircm.qc.ca/CONFERENCES/BRAINMATTERS/Pages/index.aspx?PFLG=1033&lan=1033>

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