

Dialogue 4

Deep Brain Stimulation in the Minimally Conscious State

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Noon, Friday, February 17, 2012
RMSB 4th Floor Auditorium

A clinical trial of deep brain stimulation (DBS) in the Minimally Conscious State (MCS) presented a host of ethical challenges, including the inability to obtain informed consent from study participants. This talk will address how this subject population was identified, how the study was justified and address why research in decisionally incapacitated patients is important and must continue in an ethically responsive and responsible manner.

Dr. Fins is the E. William Davis, M.D., Jr. Professor of Medical Ethics and Chief of the Division of Medical Ethics at Weill Cornell Medical College, where he also serves as Professor of Medicine, Professor of Public Health and Professor of Medicine in Psychiatry. Dr. Fins is an elected Member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, President of the American Society for Bioethics and the Humanities and a former Governor of the American College of Physicians. His most recent book is *A Palliative Ethic of Care: Clinical Wisdom at Life's End* (Jones and Bartlett, 2006). He is a co-author of the 2007 *Nature* paper describing the first use of deep brain stimulation in the minimally conscious state and the forthcoming *Rights Come to Mind: Brain Injury, Ethics and the Struggle for Consciousness* (Cambridge University Press)

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