Dr. Thomas M. Egan, a thoracic surgeon and professor of surgery in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Department of Surgery at UNC, will discuss the ethical implications of his recently funded study, “More and Better Lungs: Ex-Vivo Perfusion of Lungs from Non-Heart-Beating Donors”. He will describe practical barriers and ethical challenges of this phase 2 clinical safety study that proposes to use lungs from non-heart beating donors (NHBD). He will discuss how recruitment is carried out, assessment of risks and benefits, and consent by next-of-kin in a study involving the newly dead.

Dr. Gail E. Henderson, professor and chair of the Department of Social Medicine at UNC will moderate the discussion.

Dr. Egan was recently awarded a $4 million grant from NHLBI to conduct this clinical trial, to study assessment and transplantation of lungs from victims of sudden death. Dr. Egan, who started the lung transplant program at UNC in 1989, is internationally known for his research on lung transplantation. His lab has perfused and ventilated human lungs outside the body (ex vivo) to determine if they are suitable for transplant; the lab also has worked to show the safety of transplanting these lungs. If successful, Dr. Egan’s project could greatly increase the number of lungs available for transplant.