

Family of late radio personality Collins sues hospital

By Vernon Clark

INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

The family of longtime Philadelphia radio personality E. Steven Collins on Monday sued Chestnut Hill Hospital, alleging that he received "substandard care" before he died there in September.

The Common Pleas Court lawsuit alleges that Collins, 58, received such care in Chestnut Hill's emergency room late Sept. 8. He died of a heart attack at the hospital shortly after midnight.

Lawyer Thomas R. Kline, who filed the suit on behalf of Collins' widow, Lisa Duhart-Collins, and his two sons, said the local celebrity widely known as "E" was experiencing "chest tightness and difficulty breathing" when he arrived at the hospital by ambulance about 9 p.m.

Instead of medication to stabilize him, Kline said, Collins "was given blood-pressure medication, which allowed his blood pressure to drop dangerously low, making it difficult for his heart to function."

Calls Monday to Chestnut Hill Hospital seeking comment were not returned.

Kline said the suit seeks compensation for pain and suffering, the family's loss of a husband and father, and loss of earnings.

At the time of his death, Collins was the host of Philly Speaks, a Sunday morning public affairs show on WRNB-FM (100.3), and director of urban marketing and external relations for Radio One, which operates about 55 radio stations throughout the country.

Collins, a civic activist, was an icon in Philadelphia's African American community. He had worked in radio in the city for 35 years, including stints at stations WDAS and WHAT.

He also was a frequent commentator on local and national news shows, including MSNBC's Hardball With Chris Matthews.