

Ronald has been a blood donor since the 1990s after learning about the lifesaving difference ordinary people can make through blood, organ and stem cell donation.

He said “I saw an advert for bone marrow donors and learned there was a limited number of bone marrow donors who are black. So I registered as one and started giving blood.

“During one of my blood donation sessions I asked about giving platelets and was told I could do one or the other. As you can give platelets more frequently I switched to giving platelets.

“As a black geezer I’ve discovered the importance of ‘matching’ as a donor to people from similar backgrounds.

“I used to do a lot of work with young black people across Lancashire and it’s something I don’t do much of any more, however, I can still do something important for the black community through blood, organ and stem cell donation.

“It’s very poignant for me because it gives me the chance to give something back to my community.”

Ronald donated platelets at Manchester and Lancaster donor centres for many years until he was advised to no longer do so on medical grounds. This does not prevent him from donating whole blood, which he does regularly.

A youth worker with Lancashire County Council, Ronald has worked with young people since the 1970s both through his job and voluntary work. He currently runs the Duke of Edinburgh Award locally in his spare time.

Ronald has a lifelong love of singing which began when he would sing with his family when he was a boy. He has over the years sung at venues all over the country and across Europe and America.

He found fame in the 1990s when he sang the Top 10 ‘Stars’ track for the dance group Felix, appearing on Top of the Pops and ITV music show ‘Juice’. He toured across Scotland and America with the band.

Ronald, who is a member of the Preston Seventh Day Adventist Church, was asked to join the B Positive Choir by his friend Zena Taylor, one of the choir’s regional directors.

He said: “I love singing. I do a lot of gospel plus some soul, R’n’B and Jazz. As blood donation is very close to my heart I jumped at the chance to sing with the choir.”

Ronald believes that the B Positive Choir offers a unique way to reach out to people who have never considered giving blood before.

He said: “We see ‘Give Blood’ posters at bus stops and hospitals but how much do those particular images actually resonate with people?



"I think the choir can give a real animated context and relevance to blood donation in a creative, emotional and fun way that can really resonate in people's minds."

Ronald added: "Giving blood is such a simple act - you walk into a centre, donate, have a cup of tea and a biscuit and get on with your day. It normally takes less than an hour.

"What you don't see of course is the seismic impact it has on another human being. You change the life of so many people - not just the person who receives the blood but all of the people around them.

"It's something great that we can all do, without masses of effort. We can all be an invisible superhero!"

Ronald wants to encourage more black people to give blood to help people from similar backgrounds who need blood to help treat conditions such as sickle cell.

Ronald says, 'As a result of joining the B Positive Choir and learning this information I now try to take at least one person with me every time I give blood to encourage them to start their own journey of blood donation.

"I think that way I can help my friends to get on board with how we all can help to save a life through such a simple act."