

Mother Shamar has lived with Sickle Cell anaemia since birth. The condition has intermittently affected her life but Shamar has learnt how to manage her symptoms and prepare and protect herself from painful crisis episodes.

A Sickle Cell crisis is a painful occurrence that can take place anywhere in the body. It is a blockage of sickle shaped red cells. The crisis can last for a few hours to a few weeks. The length and intensity of pain varies between patients.

Shamar says “One of the first crisis I can remember was when I my leg swelled up – it was so painful, I was screaming in the garden for my Mum and Dad.”

Since becoming a mother Shamar has had more frequent episodes that have mostly affected her eyes. Shamar says “I have suffered with detached retinas and temporary blindness. As a mother I have to push on but it is so frustrating when my condition stops me doing things with my daughter. The pain can sneak up so it is hard to plan holidays or anything long term. The pain has stopped me from going to work and sometimes from having a normal day.”

Being part of the B Positive choir has been an amazing experience for Shamar. She adds “I’m loving being part of the choir, we’re helping to raise awareness of Sickle Cell which is fantastic but also encouraging more people to think about blood donation. I wasn’t fully aware of the need for more people from my community to give blood but being a part of the choir has helped me understand. I am now arranging awareness events and helping to educate more people. My family and friends that are able to donate are all registering and have booked appointments for the coming weeks and months. They are helping to share my journey and help support everyone that needs blood.”

