

What an amazing story

My name is Samira Furniss, I am 34 years old, and this is my story.

On New Year's Day 2010, I was just about to put my 10 month old daughter to bed. I felt a strange sensation in my right arm which resulted in a paralysis of my entire right side. A trip to A&E at Rotherham Hospital was followed by a month of tests in which I was diagnosed with 2 life threatening brain aneurysms. This is something that surprised neurosurgeons due to the intensity and my young age. I was then referred to Sheffield Hallamshire Hospital and over the next 8 months was subjected to a wide range of tests. The news was not good. It was discovered that I had many complications that resulted in full open surgery. An expert theatre team had to be put in place during my 13 hour operation. The initial surgery in October 2010 progressed well but I suffered an unexpected blood clot on my brain 5 days later which has proved to be a great challenge to my life. However, once again the amazing life-saving surgical team rushed me back into the operating theatre. During this time, there were doubts on whether I would last the night or be severely brain damaged, the outlook seemed bleak. But with the focus on my baby daughter and husband on my mind I worked so hard to pull myself through.

Since the surgery, I have learnt to talk again, eat, sit up and am on a path to walking unaided as I write this letter. My rehabilitation road has been full of ups and downs, but I am still full of positivity, determination and inspiration. As I feel that I am now on a progressive track I wanted to give something back to the groups that I feel have helped me so very much.

So what did I do?

I organised a "Live for Today" Charity Ball on the 15th October 2011 at the Royal Victoria Holiday Inn in Sheffield to raise money in aid of Neurocare and Headway Rotherham. Neurocare is essential in providing surgical equipment. Headway provides help and support after surgery. The money raised from this event will be split equally between these charities and enable them to further help people like me. They are a true lifeline.

Chris Short, from Headway Rotherham, gave me lots of support and helped me feel normal. I felt really self-conscious, so poorly and I really lost my confidence and Chris sorted my paperwork and gave a real helping hand. He probably thinks that he didn't do much for me but he moved mountains and he is the sole reason why half of the funds are going to Headway. He helped me so much!

The Charity Function raised over £6,600 on the night and I have had lots of other fund-raising activities including an Asda bag-pack and sponsored events. The total should be well over £10,000.

Thank you to everyone that was involved and I would thoroughly recommend to anyone who has been through something like this to get involved. My confidence has increased, my cognitive ability is so much higher than before and I feel so good about myself rather than thinking that I cannot do anything anymore. I have always been a big believer in fate and that all things happen for a reason. As strange as this may sound, I view my battle as a gift, something that has taught me now to live my life to the fullest and appreciate all that is around me. To those fighting their own battles, please don't ever give up, as it will get better. Stay strong and continue to fight, not only for you, but for all those who love and care about you.

I am still alive to enjoy life, to watch my daughter grow in her life and to see where my own life's journey will take me next. Every day is a celebration. I am a very lucky woman!