

Harish

As told by his daughters Shaily & Hetal

“Let’s grab a Subway, girls .” Dad said.

Instead of going to Subway, me and my sister ended up taking our dad to A&E. I still think about that day. It was a week after we had celebrated Diwali. We didn’t realise that it would take eight weeks for dad to come back home.

Dad returned home, but he had changed.

He had lost a considerable amount of weight - he was quite floppy. He needed a walking stick to support himself. He had become quiet. His medication increased and was given a book about nutrition and diet. His water and food intake dropped as well - he was looking very shrivelled with his cheek bones sticking out. It was if he had aged twenty years within the span of eight weeks.

I guess he didn’t want to trouble us by speaking about his condition. The damage had been done though. Dad was diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease Stage 5 resulting in

immediate haemodialysis treatment. Dad fitted the bill: diabetic and British Asian.

Our world completely changed. He started having mood swings, his clothes didn't fit and foods that he loved weren't allowed. With dad, we had to relearn and understand his new daily routine to ensure his dialysis runs smoothly.

Three years later, dad is thriving on haemodialysis. He is looking after his body and mind making sure that each day will lead him closer to a kidney transplant. A lot has changed to get to this point. Keeping his mind occupied so he doesn't feel lonely, applying cream to his dry skin, giving him time to rest and making sure that he sticks to the restricted diet. It's not plain sailing though; everyday there is a new wave of physical and mental pain to get through.

We hope to take him to pilgrimage in India with the whole family; something that's been on his bucket list for a long time now.

We know he'll get through this. He is a fighter.

Dedicated to all those kidney dialysis patients and their families whose life has been changed forever by kidney disease.