

Breast cancer awareness – check yourself and do something about it.

A mother of three from Bradford has urged women to check themselves after being diagnosed with breast cancer having had her 'world turned upside down'.

Fiz Ahmed, a West Yorkshire Police Officer, based in Bradford said she could not believe it when she was told by a doctor of her breast cancer diagnosis in February 2015.

"I work full time, have three children, go to the gym and swim – I just never thought it would happen to me," she said.

October is breast cancer awareness month. One person is diagnosed every 10 minutes and one in eight people will have breast cancer.

Fiz, 49, discovered the lump when she was checking herself in the shower. Ten days later she was sat at St James Hospital in Leeds with her husband being given the news.

She said: "The doctor said to me it is a lottery that no one wants to win and that it can happen to absolutely anybody."

Fiz was told the cancer was treatable and survivable. She then started months of gruelling treatment which involved six rounds of chemotherapy, three weeks apart followed by 20 rounds of radiotherapy every day for four weeks.

Particular difficult aspects of her experience were telling her three children who at the time were, 8, 9 and 19.

"My little girl asked me if I was going to die and I told her mummy was going to put her boxing gloves on."

Disclosing the news to friends and her professional family began another rollercoaster of emotions. The Police and her colleagues were very supportive and kept in regular contact, helping her to stay somewhat connected. "They were fantastic," Fizz added.

Fiz attends annual mammograms and is on medication for the next ten years.

On her return to work many people in the community were shocked she felt the need to share her story with other women and speak openly about cancer. She recently spoke at conference attended by 70 women to highlight her journey and gradual recovery.

"Check yourself and do something about it straight away," she said. "If you have an issue do not leave it and forget about it – it's so important to get it sorted."

“There is a network of people out there to catch you when you fall, ‘Breast Cancer Haven, Yorkshire’ and the amazing NHS are just parts of this incredible network.”

Ends