

# The Circular

News and views from Certitude



FOR THE LIFE YOU WANT



## Keeping in contact

We hope you enjoy finding out about what's happening across the Certitude group.

We send The Circular newsletter (previously the Family & Friends newsletter) to all families of people we support as it contains useful and important organisational information about the support that we provide.

It is vital that we keep our contact information up to date, in line with Data Protection regulations. If you no longer want to receive The Circular newsletter or if you have any questions, please email [communications@certitude.london](mailto:communications@certitude.london)

This does not affect how we contact you with regards to your relative.

## Sign up for email updates

We also send regular news and updates by email. Complete the short form on our website to customise what information you receive from us:

[www.certitude.london/subscribe](http://www.certitude.london/subscribe)

## Making a complaint

If things go wrong, it's important that everyone knows the process for raising concerns with us. We want you to feel confident that whatever the complaint it will be properly investigated and, where possible, the matter put right.

Find out more by visiting: [www.certitude.london/complaints](http://www.certitude.london/complaints)

# Welcome

**A very warm welcome to this spring edition of The Circular. I hope this finds you and your loved ones safe and well.**

While it continues to be a challenging time for everybody, we have seen glimpses of more positive times ahead, with the uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine, reduction in cases and the Government's planned easing of lockdown.

Certitude remains committed to supporting people to stay safe and well and will continue to work in line with the Government's guidance, as outlined in the roadmap document included with this issue.

Our response has also been informed by an independent review to identify and evaluate learning from the first phase of the pandemic. I am so proud that this review showed the extraordinary commitment of colleagues across the organisation in ensuring everybody stayed as safe and well as possible.

There have been some wonderful moments over the last year and our online Michael Rosen Awards gave us the opportunity to acknowledge and recognise the work of staff

and volunteers across the Certitude group. Despite not being able to meet in person, it was a time for people to come together and celebrate our achievements in style!

I want to say a huge thank you to everyone we support, families and colleagues, who continue to work together with remarkable care and compassion. I am certainly looking forward to when we can all see more of each other.



**Aisling Duffy**

Chief Executive, Certitude





# COVID-19 update

The last year has undoubtedly been one of the most difficult for people in recent memory. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed day-to-day life as we knew it, and we are again living under lockdown restrictions.

Vaccines are our route out of the pandemic and we fully support the vaccination of our staff and people we support. Colleagues across the Certitude group and people we support are among over 20 million people in the UK to have received the vaccination so far.

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## Aisling and Justin on the BBC

Aisling, Justin – a person with a learning disability who we support – and Justin’s mother were interviewed by BBC Breakfast in February saying that many people with learning disabilities had been forgotten during the first phase of the vaccine roll-out and should be next in line for the vaccination.

Justin is 40 and lives independently but is supported by us. He wasn’t in a priority group so hadn’t been offered the vaccine. His mother Mary-Ellen told the BBC, ‘Justin deserves to be protected... I hope this programme draws attention to the people who make decisions.’

We are relieved that this has now been addressed. All people who are on the learning disability register with their local GP are now eligible for the vaccine.

## Visits

We know how important visiting your loved ones is, but lockdown rules still apply, even if you and your loved one have had your vaccines. In line with Government guidance, from 8 March 2021, one named visitor will be able to visit someone living in a CQC registered home (except in the event of an outbreak within the home). In other homes, visits are currently only possible if people are in a support bubble.

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## Our roadmap out of lockdown

We have published our Certitude roadmap to reducing restrictions, which shows how we will plan a gradual reopening of locations across Certitude, in line with the Government’s roadmap for reducing lockdown restrictions. Our priority, as always, is ensuring the safety of people we support, their families and team members.

We are optimistic that we will be able to reopen some day opportunities soon. These services will be subject to a risk assessment and full PPE will be worn. For more information visit

[www.certitude.london/roadmap](http://www.certitude.london/roadmap)

Sign up to hear the latest news via email:  
[www.certitude.london/subscribe](http://www.certitude.london/subscribe)

# Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic

In August last year, the Certitude Board and Leadership Team commissioned an independent review to identify and evaluate the learning from the organisation's response to the pandemic.

The overriding theme of this review was of clear, calm and decisive leadership throughout. And we're proud that the review also found remarkable commitment among our staff to step into the eye of this storm and to continue in their support of people at higher risk from the virus, frequently at cost to themselves and their families.

Many of the changes that we made as a result of the pandemic will benefit everyone across the Certitude group over the longer term.

Read the full review:

[www.certitude.london/pandemic-response](http://www.certitude.london/pandemic-response)

**Be aware of fake vaccine invite emails or texts. Remember, you will never be asked to enter your bank details when booking an NHS vaccine.**

# Have you seen our Annual Review 2020?

We make no apology for our Annual Review 2020 focusing on the many achievements of people across the organisation over the past months. At such a time, people have continued to impress, inspire and keep going. Now more than ever, the Certitude traits that make our organisation what it is – loving, brave, unconventional and London – have never felt so strong.

Our review includes stories about how we have strengthened our position as the leading not-for-profit support provider in London through our merger with Yarrow, how The Gate art centre kept their edge in lockdown, and how our work in the Fulfilling Lives programme is making a significant difference to people by challenging traditional support methods and instead building alternative approaches to support.

We couldn't produce an annual review without talking about how technology has played a more important role in all our lives in the last year; you can read how people have learned new skills and found new ways to stay in touch and keep each other going throughout the pandemic.

See our full review:

[www.certitude.london/annual-review-2020](http://www.certitude.london/annual-review-2020)

# The Michael Rosen Awards 2020

Wednesday 16 December 2020 saw staff across the Certitude group celebrating our 10th annual Michael Rosen Awards. The event is our way to recognise the great work that people do every day across Certitude. Except because it was 2020 we did it a bit differently!

Staff, people we support and families came together virtually for a day of celebration where we celebrated everyone's achievements. Because last year, more than any other year, we wanted to recognise and acknowledge just how great every individual and team has been!

The highlight of the day was the broadcast of the awards ceremony where our Board and Leadership Team announced the winners of the Michael Rosen Awards 2020.

The Michael Rosen Award is the ultimate accolade in our annual awards ceremony.

The 2020 award went to the Community Development Team and Connect & Do Peer Facilitators. The team has clearly shown Certitude's values during the year – working together they inspired each other and those around them.

When the country went into lockdown in March last year, the team moved their Connect & Do programme online and kept people across Certitude entertained, motivated and able to learn new skills and interests. From laughing yoga to singing, to art and design sessions, they have created a weekly programme of activities that are now available not just within Certitude, but to anyone, anywhere!

**Our thanks go to Sheila Rosen and family, without whose support our awards would not be possible.**

## And the winners are...

### **Best Volunteer Award**

Runner up: Shaun Lyons  
Winner: Kate Nicklin

### **Inspiring Leader Award**

Joint winner: Juan Gallego  
Joint winner: Pauline Campbell

### **Best Colleague Award**

Runner up: Bruno Powell  
Winner: Aisha Bhatti

### **Transforming Lives Award**

Runner up: S's team  
Winner: Carly Kirton

### **Best Team Award**

Runner up: Tree House

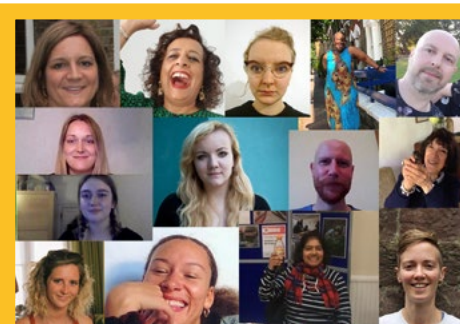
Winner: Old Oak Road and Ellingham Road team

### **Special Recognition Award 2020**

Winner: The COVID Task Team

### **The Michael Rosen Award**

Winner: Community Development Team and Connect & Do Peer Facilitators



# Superstar fundraisers

Our award-winning fundraiser Kate Nicklin has raised over £1,000 despite the Virgin Money London Marathon not going ahead! Kate braved the rain and cold and completed the 26.2 miles of the virtual London Marathon in October. Kate has already agreed to continue her fundraising efforts and run the marathon in 2021. Thank you Kate!

And our Chief Executive, Aisling, donned her trainers and a Santa outfit in December to take part in this year's virtual Santa Run. As well as completing the 5km run wearing a Santa suit in a very impressive 34 minutes 26 seconds, Aisling has also smashed her fundraising target and raised £1,300 for Certitude; money which will go towards projects that change lives, from providing technology that helps people communicate to arts workshops for people in recovery.

Aisling said the highlight of her run was the local refuse collectors telling her 'the North Pole is the other way'!

Well done Aisling!

Jay Morris, who has autism and lives in Richmond, put on his new hiking shoes and did a sponsored walk to raise money for the family of his Certitude support worker who died with COVID-19.



Jay told us:

*"I was very sad and shocked after I was told my long-time support worker had died from the virus. I really missed him being around and I would often think of the memories we shared. I really wanted to help, I knew he had young children and I wanted to show them I cared and valued their dad."*

*"My aunt Sarah and I walked 20 miles. Our feet were aching and I needed a hot bath, but we had achieved our goal and raised over £2,000 for his family!"*

# Lights, camera, action!



Our Michael Rosen Award winning Connect & Do team began working with the Young Vic on their TWENTY TWENTY project in late 2019.

The team and people we support worked with a director and writer, with the focus on enhancing creative skills and building a community company. The group started to develop a new play which was to be performed by our community company at the Young Vic at the end of 2020...

Then, the pandemic happened.

Thankfully, the TWENTY TWENTY project continued, and our brilliant people came together each week online to create theatre.

Workshops in halls became Zoom meetings, warm ups and dance routines were performed in bedrooms and kitchens, and ideas and scripts were shared in the post, on email and via text.

Instead of a play, the team produced a short film, Tapestry, shot in socially distanced conditions, which premiered in January!

You can find out more about the project and watch our film here:

[www.youngvic.org/twenty-twenty](http://www.youngvic.org/twenty-twenty)

To find out more about our Connect & Do activities and download the weekly programme, visit:

[www.certitude.london/connect-do](http://www.certitude.london/connect-do)

## Be the difference – become a support worker

As London's leading adult social care provider, we know the positive impact key workers like our dedicated support workers are having during this challenging period.

Many of our roles don't require experience – we are simply looking for enthusiastic people who want to support people to live the life they want.

To find out more, visit

[www.certitude.london/work-for-us](http://www.certitude.london/work-for-us)

or contact us at

[recruitment@certitude.london](mailto:recruitment@certitude.london)