

**EIP**

# EIP embraces Mental Health Awareness Week 2020

Mental Health Awareness Week 2020 has been timely encouragement to talk about mental health during the current pandemic. To promote good mental wellbeing, EIP last year established a Mental Health initiative, in which ten staff across the four UK offices qualified as Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs). MHFAs are trained to look for signs that someone is struggling with their mental health and provide appropriate support.

For this year's Mental Health Awareness Week, five MFHAs shared their experiences while living in lockdown, recording a video blog each for every working day of the week. The blogs covered a variety of experiences such as working from home with a young family in central London and exploring the open green spaces around Bath to break up the working day.

One way EIP staff have been staying in touch since working from home is through a virtual tea break; a daily video call, open to everyone at EIP to chat with people from around the firm. Each day this week, someone from the MHFA team joined the virtual tea break to talk about mental health and the importance of ending the stigma.

Sharon St. Louis, a former Samaritan and leader of the EIP MHFA team, was pleased with the way the MHFA team continued to provide support during the lockdown. Sharon said: "Mental Health Awareness Week has been fully embraced by EIP thanks to the vlogs that have been shared from our amazing MHFAs. It has allowed us to get an insight into how their mental health has been holding up during this very strange time, enabling the viewer to reflect on how they are being similarly affected and share what they have experienced. One of the themes that came out of the vlogs is the importance of actively listening to someone that would like to be heard. We can all manage that small act of

kindness which can help to improve all of our mental health”.