

Statement from Love Island

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Everyone at Love Island is so shocked and absolutely devastated with the tragic news of Mike Thalassitis.

The Mike we knew was a remarkable and charismatic young man who made a huge impression both on the Love Island team and on viewers of the show. Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with his family and friends at this difficult time.

When something so awful happens it is natural to enter a period of soul searching and ask whether anything could have been done to help avoid something so terrible happening. It is not for us to speculate on the reasons behind this tragedy and what is so heartbreaking is that we simply cannot know.

Our show put Mike in the spotlight with all the ups and downs that brings. Mike's TV career took off with Love Island and he went on to take part in other reality shows as his career grew.

Since the terrible news there have been a lot of people questioning Love Island's processes and aftercare. Many of the things that have been said about them bear no relation to the support we offer. We want to outline our care processes.

As the show has grown ever more popular and our Islanders get increased attention in an ever changing landscape, each series we evolve the support we give them.

Our duty of care is a continuous and ongoing process for each Islander. This follows three key stages; pre-filming, filming, and aftercare. We work with both an independent GP and a psychological consultant to provide an assessment of the physical and mental health of each of the shortlisted cast members and their suitability for inclusion on the programme.

The medical team also contacts each Islander's GP to check they feel that person is able to take part. We ask for full disclosure from potential cast members to these health professionals so that so that we can support them appropriately. As TV producers, we rely on medical experts to assess both mental and physical health to ensure that each candidate is suitable for inclusion.

Care continues whilst the Islanders are in the villa. We have a medical team on location which includes a psychological consultant. They not only look after Islanders' healthcare needs, but also monitor them to check that there are no emerging signs of any problems developing whilst they are in the villa. Additionally, several of our senior team, who monitor the cast around the clock, have been trained in mental health first aid.

When the time comes for each Islander to leave the show, our aftercare process kicks in. Every Islander has a series of debrief meetings on location with the executive team and the medical team, including the psychological consultant. After this, they are told how to access after care support as well as information on seeking professional representation. They also meet with the press team the day after leaving the villa and are briefed and advised on their press coverage whilst in the villa.

We have had requests for help from former Islanders, and have provided this.

We have always recognised that this should be an evolving process and six months ago we engaged Dr Paul Litchfield, an experienced physician and a Chief Medical Officer, to independently review our medical processes on Love Island. He has extensive experience of working with large companies and Government in the area of mental health.

This review has led us to extend our support processes to offer therapy to all Islanders and not only those that reach out to us. And we will be delivering bespoke training to all future Islanders to include social media and financial management.

The key focus will be for us to no longer be reliant on the islanders asking us for support but for us to proactively check in with them on a regular basis.

Having said all of this about Love Island we must not lose sight of the wider issue which is the importance of the conversation on mental health. Across ITV we have worked with a number of charities including CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) on Project 84 and with Samaritans and CALM on Coronation Street, tackling the issue of male suicide. Conversations about mental health have never been more important.

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