

POSITION STATEMENT ON PIRACETAM¹

With this Position Statement on Piracetam the aim of the Down Syndrome Society of SA (DSSSA) Inc is to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity, worth and equal rights of all people, regardless of handicap or disability. All people, including those with Down syndrome, are a part of their local communities, and shall be recognized as having a rich contribution to make in the development and well being of the human community. The vision of the DSSSA is ‘...opening doors together to enrich the lives of people with Down syndrome.’

Piracetam is a drug, which is neither a registered nor listed product in Australia; although it has received approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). It is available via the Special Access Scheme (SAS) for use on an individual patient basis only. Piracetam is imported into Australia from Belgium through Fauldings for use in hospital settings. Patients may individually import the agent; a prescription is required and must be presented to a pharmacy that deals with international importation of pharmaceuticals, such as IDIS pharmacies. A recent study by Health Canada evaluating the effect of Piracetam on children with Down syndrome reached the conclusion that Piracetam has not been beneficial in improving the cognitive and/or learning potential of individuals with Down syndrome and could potentially have harmful side effects.

Therefore, the DSSSA does not endorse the use of Piracetam in children or adults with Down syndrome at this time.

¹ Position Statement – Piracetam. Updated and approved – Nov 2003 (Canadian Down Syndrome Society)