

# Anti-hypertensive prices under pressure

December was a quiet month for recently-launched products in category M of the Drug Tariff of pharmacy reimbursement prices. As Figure 1 shows, lowest and average price changes were low or non-existent, with only a handful of items experiencing double-digit price changes at the year-end.

Irbesartan 75mg in 28-tablet packs was typical, with no movement in its lowest or average price. Versions of the anti-hypertensive combined with hydrochlorothiazide (HCT), however, told a different story. Falls in their average prices of about a third were some of the highest recorded in the month (see Figure 4).

Average prices for valsartans with HCT fell even faster, reversing their upward price movement of a few months ago. At that time, with monthly price increases of 50%, they were in Figure 3 among the biggest risers (*Generics bulletin*, 3 November 2014, page 25).

However, just as the market for one type of anti-hypertensive seemed to be settling down, another was starting to take off.

Average prices for plain fosinopril tablets shot up by four- and five-times last month, making a mockery of their Drug Tariff reimbursement prices. Pharmacists would have been reimbursed £1.92 (US\$2.90) for dispensing the 10mg strength last month, but they would have paid a trade price of £8.38 for it (see Figure 3).

Curiously, neither fosinopril strength appeared in the list of price concessions granted by the Department of Health for December – overriding Drug Tariff prices for products with high trade prices – but lisinopril 20mg with HCT 12.5mg was given a late listing on 23 December. The concession reflected a doubling of the product's average trade price to £3.40 – compared with a Drug Tariff price of £1.70 – but at £11.52, the concession meant pharmacists were easily in pocket. **G**

RECENT LAUNCHES				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Amorolfine lacquer 5% 5ml	£3.74	±0	£5.39	-11
Atorvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.48	-4	£0.91	+8
Candesartan tabs 8mg 28	£0.38	+9	£0.78	-1
Cilostazol tabs 100mg 56	£9.20	-8	£18.20	+3
Cyclizine tabs 50mg 100	£7.85	+1	£10.84	+3
Desloratadine tabs 5mg 30	£0.35	-10	£0.80	-2
Desogestrel tabs 75µg 84	£1.72	±0	£2.59	±0
Donepezil tabs 10mg 28	£0.60	-9	£1.17	+6
Entacapone tabs 200mg 30	£4.65	-3	£5.56	-2
Escitalopram tabs 10mg 28	£0.70	-3	£1.21	+6
Hydroxychloroquine tabs 200mg 60	£3.30	±0	£4.23	+3
Irbesartan tabs 75mg 28	£0.25	±0	£0.74	±0
Latanoprost eye drops .005% 2.5ml	£0.95	±0	£1.59	+6
Memantine tabs 10mg 28	£1.09	-13	£2.81	-1
Montelukast tabs 10mg 28	£0.99	±0	£1.62	+4
Naratriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£1.25	+5	£1.56	±0
Quetiapine tabs 25mg 60	£0.45	-4	£1.11	+4
Rabeprazole tabs 10mg 28	£1.33	±0	£1.85	-1
Raloxifene tabs 60mg 28	£4.19	+16	£6.25	-5
Riluzole tabs 50mg 56	£13.99	±0	£26.73	+5
Rizatriptan tabs 10mg 3	£0.86	±0	£2.67	+13
Sildenafil tabs 100mg 4	£0.39	±0	£0.68	+2
Telmisartan tabs 80mg 28	£0.80	-10	£1.83	+1
Tolterodine tabs 2mg 56	£1.44	-7	£2.37	±0
Zolmitriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£0.42	+8	£0.98	+5

FAST MOVERS			
Product/Strength/Pack size	Price offers as at 31 December		
	October	November	December
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	122	141	102
Fluoxetine caps 20mg 30	101	102	87
Lansoprazole caps 15mg 28	97	106	85
Warfarin tabs 1mg 28	85	97	85
Alendronate tabs 70mg 4	96	106	84
Amitriptyline tabs 25mg 28	80	87	84
Citalopram tabs 10mg 28	91	93	84
Tramadol caps 50mg 100	86	114	81
Atorvastatin tabs 40mg 26	93	94	80
Ramipril caps 10mg 28	94	91	78

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Fosinopril tabs 10mg 28	£1.25	+6	£8.38	+424
Fosinopril tabs 20mg 28	£1.55	-1	£8.03	+294
Lisinopril+HCT tabs 20/12.5mg 28	£0.89	+7	£3.40	+123
Mefenamic acid tabs 500mg 28	£1.65	±0	£5.21	+86
Hypromellose drops 0.3% 10ml	£0.23	-4	£0.79	+71
Dipyridamole tabs 100mg 84	£3.40	+10	£7.26	+49

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Valsartan+HCT tabs 80/12.5mg 28	£1.09	±0	£2.11	-39
Valsartan+HCT tabs 160/25mg 28	£1.99	+18	£2.92	-37
Irbesartan+HCT tabs 150/12.5mg 28	£0.99	±0	£1.86	-33
Irbesartan+HCT tabs 300/25mg 28	£1.39	-7	£2.44	-31
Irbesartan+HCT tabs 300/12.5mg 28	£1.39	-4	£2.47	-30
Nitrofurantoin tabs 100mg 28	£2.05	-18	£4.36	-29

Figure 1 (above): Comparison between the periods 1-30 November and 1-31 December 2014 of UK trade prices of the most recently-launched generics listed in category M of the Drug Tariff of pharmacy-reimbursement prices. Averages calculated from at least 30 data points. Figure 2 (top right): Ranking of fastest-moving products subject to the most price offers made to independent UK pharmacists (one strength per ingredient; offers recorded by 31 December). Figure 3 (centre right) and Figure 4 (bottom right): Biggest average trade-price changes between 1-30 November and 1-31 December 2014. Averages calculated from at least 20 data points. Data for Figures 2, 3 and 4 from a basket of about 750 commonly-dispensed generics. Recently-launched products in Figure 1 excluded from Figures 3 and 4 (Source – WaveData).

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Tel: +44 (0)1702 425125. E-mail [cjoynson@wavedata.co.uk](mailto:cjoynson@wavedata.co.uk).

