

Fluoxetine capsules cost just a halfpenny

Thanks to a price cut of more than a fifth last month, independent pharmacists and dispensing doctors could have bought 20mg capsules of fluoxetine for just a halfpenny each. As Figure 1 shows, a 21% cut in the lowest price of the antidepressant meant that 30-capsule packs of fluoxetine 20mg were on offer for just £0.15 (US\$0.23).

Such a steep price cut by one player, possibly due to short-dated stock, also affected fluoxetine's average trade price, pulling it down by 5% during the month. At £0.36 per pack, the average capsule price was little more than one penny. Pharmacists were being reimbursed £1.41 for dispensing the product, which is in category M of the Drug Tariff, giving them an average profit margin of £1.05, or almost 75% of their reimbursement fee. Fluoxetine is a long-established generic drug in the

UK, and these days Eli Lilly has a trade list price for Prozac of just £1.50, which is only a few pence more than the generic's reimbursement price.

Elsewhere in the market, good deals were to be had for four-tablet packs of alendronate 70mg and 28-tablet packs of amlodipine 10mg. At just £0.18, the latter's lowest price was almost exactly 99% cheaper than Pfizer's Istin, which still carries a trade price of £16.55. Pharmacists were reimbursed at £1.07, giving them an 83% dispensing margin.

Sertraline prices continued to fall last month after recent shortages, as did those for pramipexole following its recent launch. Gabapentin prices were also lower as they fell back after shortages (see Figure 2). However, some well-established products, like levothyroxine, were offered at much higher prices (see Figure 3).

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Prednisolone tabs 5mg 28	£0.58	-32	£1.65	-22
Metronidazole tabs 400mg 21	£0.39	-3	£1.06	-18
Gabapentin caps 100mg 100	£2.89	-17	£5.11	-17
Diazepam tabs 2mg 28	£0.13	±0	£0.20	-16
Diazepam tabs 5mg 28	£0.14	±0	£0.22	-16
Gabapentin caps 300mg 100	£3.49	±0	£5.38	-14

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Furosemide tabs 500mg 28	£3.60	+117	£8.16	+74
Tolbutamide tabs 500mg 28	£1.44	-3	£3.13	+60
Betahistine tabs 8mg 120	£1.70	+57	£2.70	+32
Tamoxifen tabs 10mg 30	£0.99	+5	£2.74	+31
Levothyroxine tabs 50µg 28	£0.59	+37	£0.83	+29
Carvedilol tabs 3.125µg 28	£0.32	±0	£0.52	+24

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-31 August 2011 and 1-30 September 2011 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 14 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-31

August 2011 and 1-30 September 2011 in lowest and average UK trade prices of about 120 commonly-dispensed generics. The basket specifically excludes the 'fast movers' shown below, but includes other presentations of the same products. Each average price was calculated from at least 15 data points (Source - WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Alendronate tabs 70mg 4	£0.27	-16	£0.36	-8
Amlodipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.18	-18	£0.30	-3
Carvedilol tabs 12.5mg 28	£0.47	-4	£0.73	+18
Ciprofloxacin tabs 500mg 10	£0.27	+17	£0.38	+4
Citalopram tabs 20mg 28	£0.32	-9	£0.69	-22
Clarithromycin tabs 250mg 14	£0.66	-4	£1.28	-9
Clopidogrel tabs 75mg 30	£1.04	+2	£1.47	-3
Enalapril tabs 20mg 28	£0.26	±0	£0.35	+1
Finasteride tabs 5mg 28	£0.83	-2	£1.17	-12
Fluoxetine caps 20mg 30	£0.15	-21	£0.36	-5
Fosinopril tabs 20mg 28	£1.49	+6	£1.92	+1
Glimepiride tabs 4mg 30	£0.57	±0	£0.83	±0
Lamotrigine tabs 100mg 56	£2.10	+8	£2.82	-2
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£0.79	+1	£0.91	-1
Lisinopril tabs 20mg 28	£0.36	+3	£0.45	-2
Losartan tabs 50mg 28	£0.36	-8	£0.52	-10
Losartan tabs 100mg 28	£0.38	-3	£0.66	-9
Metformin tabs 500mg 84	£0.46	±0	£0.69	+1
Mirtazapine tabs 30mg 28	£0.80	+16	£1.13	-2
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	£0.55	+6	£0.67	-4
Ondansetron tabs 4mg 30	£2.44	-2	£4.00	-2
Pantoprazole tabs 20mg 28	£0.40	-2	£0.64	+2
Paroxetine tabs 20mg 30	£0.87	-2	£1.17	-2
Pramipexole tabs 180µg 30	£0.80	-17	£2.34	-8
Pramipexole tabs 700µg 30	£3.85	-20	£7.95	-10

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Pravastatin tabs 40mg 28	£1.18	+1	£1.46	-1
Ramipril caps 10mg 28	£0.49	-4	£0.62	-3
Risedronate tabs 35mg 4	£0.67	-11	£1.01	-13
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.69	±0	£1.29	±0
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£0.95	-32	£4.62	-28
Simvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.21	-5	£0.32	-6
Simvastatin tabs 40mg 28	£0.36	-3	£0.47	-4
Sumatriptan tabs 50mg 6	£0.71	+22	£0.95	-2
Tamsulosin caps 400µg 30	£0.74	-6	£1.16	+16
Terbinafine tabs 250mg 14	£0.89	-12	£1.35	-2
Topiramate tabs 50mg 60	£1.72	+22	£2.78	±0
Topiramate tabs 100mg 60	£2.39	+3	£3.66	-2
Venlafaxine tabs 37.5mg 56	£1.69	±0	£2.23	-3
Venlafaxine XL caps 75mg 28	£0.52	+4	£0.93	+3
Venlafaxine XL caps 150mg 28	£0.99	-9	£1.68	-2

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