

# Gabapentin's price keeps on growing

Price changes struggled to get into double digits in August, when 100-capsule packs of gabapentin 300mg stood out, appearing in our 'biggest risers' table for the third month running (see Figure 3).

Back in June, the lowest trade price of the product was £2.99 (US\$4.61) after a modest 6% monthly increase; while the average price had moved up by about a third to £5.60 (*Generics bulletin*, 16 July 2010, page 19). August's lowest price, however, more than doubled to £10.42 and the average price rose to £16.32.

Taking the three-month period together, the lowest price of the gabapentin product has increased by 250%, while the average price has nearly tripled. This has been bad news for pharmacists, who have seen the product's Drug Tariff reimbursement price climb from £3.84 in June to £4.99 in July, before remaining steady last month. By

shopping around, they would have made a 22% dispensing margin in June and 15% in July. Last month, however, they would have lost more than they were being reimbursed.

Elsewhere, the price of omeprazole capsules continued to settle down after the price hikes, particularly of the 20mg strength, earlier this year. Double-digit declines meant the lowest price available to independent pharmacists and dispensing doctors in August was less than the average price of £0.83 recorded last October (see Figure 1).

Heavy competitive discounting was not apparent in the price falls of the products highlighted in Figure 2. Average-price declines were not replicated among the equivalent lowest prices, with only an offer for 21-capsule packs of amoxicillin 500mg contributing to the product's overall price fall. G

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Bendroflumethiazide tabs 5mg 28	£0.12	+9	£0.21	-29
Codeine tabs 30mg 28	£0.41	±0	£0.61	-22
Metformin tabs 500mg 28	£0.24	±0	£0.43	-17
Oxytetracycline tabs 250mg 28	£0.32	±0	£0.45	-16
Amoxicillin caps 500mg 21	£0.39	-5	£0.58	-15
Lisinopril tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.15	+7	£0.21	-14

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-31 July 2010 and 1-25 August 2010 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 18 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-31 July 2010

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Furosemide tabs 20mg 28	£0.09	+13	£0.19	+36
Atenolol tabs 25mg 28	£0.04	-20	£0.17	+32
Gabapentin caps 300mg 100	£10.42	+146	£16.32	+24
Aspirin disp. tabs 75mg 28	£0.12	±0	£0.20	+23
Atenolol tabs 50mg 28	£0.14	+27	£0.24	+23
Levothyroxine tabs 50µg 28	£0.31	±0	£0.73	+18

and 1-25 August 2010 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 13 data points (Source - WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Alendronate tabs 70mg 4	£0.19	±0	£0.26	-6
Amlodipine tabs 5mg 28	£0.20	-17	£0.35	-8
Amlodipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.32	±0	£0.50	+4
Carvedilol tabs 6.25mg 28	£0.38	-5	£0.57	+10
Carvedilol tabs 12.5mg 28	£0.46	-6	£0.67	-1
Ciprofloxacin tabs 500mg 10	£0.27	±0	£0.48	-17
Citalopram tabs 10mg 28	£0.30	±0	£0.54	-10
Citalopram tabs 20mg 28	£0.48	+17	£0.80	+7
Citalopram tabs 40mg 28	£0.54	±0	£0.84	-4
Clarithromycin tabs 250mg 14	£1.14	±0	£1.59	-7
Enalapril tabs 20mg 28	£0.33	±0	£0.47	-5
Fosinopril tabs 20mg 28	£1.46	±0	£2.18	+12
Glimepiride tabs 4mg 30	£0.61	-8	£1.21	-6
Lamotrigine tabs 50mg 56	£1.43	-1	£2.57	+6
Lamotrigine tabs 100mg 56	£2.50	+1	£4.06	+14
Lansoprazole caps 15mg 28	£0.49	±0	£0.64	-8
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£1.09	-3	£1.34	-3
Lisinopril tabs 5mg 28	£0.18	+13	£0.25	-18
Lisinopril tabs 10mg 28	£0.19	-14	£0.29	-11
Lisinopril tabs 20mg 28	£0.32	-14	£0.49	-6
Metformin tabs 500mg 84	£0.37	±0	£0.95	+20
Mirtazapine tabs 30mg 28	£0.99	-3	£1.43	-9
Omeprazole caps 10mg 28	£0.79	-10	£1.08	-11
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	£0.75	-12	£0.98	-13
Ondansetron tabs 4mg 30	£2.50	±0	£8.83	+11

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Paroxetine tabs 20mg 30	£0.79	+1	£1.34	-3
Pravastatin tabs 20mg 28	£1.18	+3	£1.49	-6
Pravastatin tabs 40mg 28	£1.59	±0	£2.05	-3
Ramipril caps 2.5mg 28	£0.33	-13	£0.57	±0
Ramipril caps 5mg 28	£0.34	-8	£0.64	-1
Ramipril caps 10mg 28	£0.49	-17	£0.77	+2
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.80	-6	£1.64	-12
Sertraline tabs 50mg 28	£0.39	-7	£0.82	-15
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£0.54	-4	£1.02	+1
Simvastatin tabs 10mg 28	£0.16	±0	£0.22	-3
Simvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.22	-8	£0.30	-3
Simvastatin tabs 40mg 28	£0.43	-2	£0.51	-7
Sumatriptan tabs 50mg 6	£0.73	-1	£1.08	-8
Tamsulosin caps 400µg 30	£0.88	±0	£1.26	-24
Terbinafine tabs 250mg 14	£1.20	+12	£1.68	+18

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