

Raloxifene falls revive pharmacy margins

Prices for 28-tablet packs of raloxifene 60mg were some of the fastest-falling among recent launches in August (see Figure 1). Double-digit price falls improved independent pharmacists' margins, which had been trimmed in July by Drug Tariff changes.

July had seen the Drug Tariff price for raloxifene 60mg cut from £3.89 (US\$5.16) to £3.73, reducing the average pharmacist's profit margin to just 2%, based on an average trade price unchanged in the month at £3.64 (*Generics bulletin*, 26 August 2016, page 16). The 12% average trade price fall in August, however, lifted the margin to 14%; while the 15% drop in the lowest price potentially gave pharmacists a 40% dispensing margin if they had shopped around.

Aripiprazole 10mg prices declined by double-digit amounts, as did those for duloxetine 30mg capsules. Pharmacy profit margins for the former were 72% at the lowest trade price and 45% on average. Comparable margins for duloxetine 30mg were 74% and 46%.

Naratriptan 2.5mg tablets in two pack sizes showed some of the largest price rises in August. The larger, 12-tablet pack size more than doubled in price on average, but prices for the smaller 6-pack easily tripled (see Figure 2). This smaller size was the pack included in the Department of Health's (DoH) list of price concessions in August. A concessionary price of £13.49 was granted, almost exactly the same as the product's average price in the market. Three strengths of valsartan were also on the DoH's list.

Despite dramatic price falls in August, the DoH was still granting price concessions to isosorbide 10mg and 20mg in 56-tablet packs. Concessionary prices of £5.00 for the 10mg strength and £4.00 for the 20mg would have been welcome, but they were some way short of the average market prices of £7.96 and £4.68, respectively (see Figure 3).

Lansoprazole overtook omeprazole as the subject of most price offers in August, while atorvastatin fell a few places (see Figure 4). **G**

RECENT LAUNCHES				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Aripiprazole tabs 10mg 28	£0.78	-12	£1.52	-13
Benzylamine 0.15% 300ml	£4.85	±0	£5.62	+1
Carbimazole tabs 5mg 100	£54.99	-8	£69.88	±0
Celecoxib caps 200mg 30	£0.79	+3	£1.34	-6
Cilostazol tabs 100mg 56	£1.85	-2	£2.95	-10
Cyclizine tabs 50mg 100	£5.80	+1	£7.86	-2
Desogestrel tabs 75µg 84	£1.13	-4	£1.82	-14
Duloxetine caps 30mg 28	£1.24	-11	£2.62	-10
Entacapone tabs 200mg 30	£3.55	-5	£5.20	-5
Eplerenone tabs 25mg 28	£3.19	-8	£5.19	-7
Escitalopram tabs 10mg 28	£0.24	±0	£0.69	-6
Fusidic acid cream 2% 15g	£1.22	±0	£1.59	-2
Memantine tabs 10mg 28	£0.55	-2	£0.91	-4
Mometasone furoate 0.1% 30g	£1.10	-9	£1.91	-1
Montelukast tabs 10mg 28	£1.15	+13	£1.55	-6
Nortriptyline tabs 10mg 100	£32.39	+5	£42.10	-2
Oxcarbazepine tabs 300mg 50	£4.90	±0	£6.00	-3
Rabeprazole tabs 10mg 28	£0.70	-18	£1.15	-8
Raloxifene tabs 60mg 28	£2.25	-15	£3.22	-12
Riluzole tabs 50mg 56	£10.95	-3	£15.54	-8
Rizatriptan tabs 10mg 3	£0.69	-9	£1.38	-13
Sevelamer tabs 800mg 180	£45.00	-7	£63.70	-11
Sildenafil tabs 100mg 4	£0.25	+9	£0.56	-2
Telmisartan tabs 80mg 28	£0.77	+4	£1.33	-6
Tolterodine tabs 2mg 56	£1.29	-2	£1.68	-4

Figure 1 (above): Comparison between the periods 1-31 July 2016 and 1-31 August 2016 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) and Figure 3 (centre right): Biggest average trade-price changes between 1-31 July 2016 and 1-31 August 2016. Averages calculated from at least 12 data points. Figure 4 (bottom 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 August). 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 2 and 3 (Source – WaveData).

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Naratriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£1.90	+47	£13.44	+260
Venlafaxine XL caps 150mg 28	£1.55	+3	£7.65	+121
Naratriptan tabs 2.5mg 12	£2.95	+18	£20.90	+114
Generic Malarone tabs 250/100mg 12	£5.15	+3	£18.26	+99
Pramipexole tabs 350µg 100	£0.49	-2	£7.61	+77
Metronidazole tabs 400mg 21	£0.30	±0	£2.14	+68

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Isosorbide tabs 40mg 56	£1.71	-6	£7.44	-51
Isosorbide tabs 20mg 56	£1.75	-30	£4.68	-51
Isosorbide tabs 10mg 56	£1.45	-52	£7.96	-39
Glyceryl trinitrate tabs 500µg 100	£2.20	+4	£3.20	-39
Isradipine tabs 2.5mg 56	£71.78	-7	£111.76	-22
Domperidone tabs 10mg 30	£0.08	+14	£0.39	-21

FAST MOVERS			
Product/Strength/Pack size	Price offers as at 31 August 2016		
	June	July	August
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	104	113	94
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	133	132	88
Sertraline tabs 50mg 28	102	103	85
Warfarin tabs 1mg 28	85	90	85
Atorvastatin tabs 20mg 28	102	121	82
Bendroflumethiazide tabs 2.5mg 28	87	94	78
Paracetamol caplets 500mg 100	96	98	78
Simvastatin tabs 40mg 28	96	93	78
Vitamin B Compound tabs 28	71	79	78
Hydrocortisone tabs 10mg 30	88	81	77

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