

Tolbutamide takes a downturn after highs

Having topped the 'biggest risers' table in December (**Generics bulletin**, 13 January 2012, page 27), 28-tablet packs of tolbutamide 500mg were to be found astride the 'biggest fallers' table in January (see Figure 2). A modest average price decline of 13% last month, however, compared with a 295% rise in December.

Nevertheless, for the first month since October 2011, the product was not granted 'no cheaper stock obtainable' (NCSO) status by the Department of Health (DoH). This allows pharmacists to dispense a more expensive alternative. Instead, the product was listed among those granted special price concessions. Pharmacists were reimbursed £24.56 (US\$38.26) for dispensing the diabetes drug, giving them a dispensing margin of 28% over the average market price.

Another product granted a price concession in January was 28-

tablet packs of nitrazepam 5mg. This reflected the 165% rise in the product's average price, as recorded at the head of Figure 3, and marked the second consecutive month it had been singled out by the DoH. Pharmacists were reimbursed £4.20. This was down from £4.63 in December, but still gave them a 32% dispensing margin. Two betahistine products were alone in having NCSO status in January.

Elsewhere, prices for 'fast movers' were relatively volatile, with numerous double-digit changes in the month. Average prices for the two losartan products in Figure 1 showed the largest gains, closely followed by those for the two venlafaxine products. Minimum prices for the four products were less certain, however.

Price offers were withdrawn for 30-capsule packs of fluoxetine 20mg, and for 28-tablet packs of pravastatin 40mg. **G**

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Tolbutamide tabs 500mg 28	£11.29	-25	£19.22	-13
Amiodarone tabs 200mg 28	£0.83	-3	£1.10	-10
Diazepam tabs 10mg 28	£0.14	±0	£0.24	-9
Ciprofloxacin tabs 250mg 10	£0.08	-20	£0.21	-7
Ranitidine tabs 300mg 30	£0.85	±0	£1.07	-7
Penicillamine tabs 250mg 56	£16.90	±0	£20.98	-7

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Nitrazepam tabs 5mg 28	£0.50	+150	£3.18	+165
Glibenclamide tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.12	±0	£0.42	+48
Famotidine tabs 20mg 28	£1.50	+69	£4.56	+36
Paroxetine tabs 30mg 30	£0.77	+93	£1.50	+20
Glibenclamide tabs 5mg 28	£0.17	-6	£0.41	+20
Isosorbide tabs 20mg 56	£0.38	+6	£0.59	+17

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-31 December 2011 and 1-25 January 2012 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 12 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-31

December 2011 and 1-25 January 2012 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 31 data points (Source - WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Alendronate tabs 70mg 4	£0.19	-10	£0.30	-5
Amlodipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.20	±0	£0.29	+4
Carvedilol tabs 12.5mg 28	£0.47	+7	£0.74	+4
Ciprofloxacin tabs 500mg 10	£0.30	±0	£0.42	+4
Citalopram tabs 20mg 28	£0.24	±0	£0.54	+7
Clarithromycin tabs 250mg 14	£0.53	+10	£1.38	+11
Clopidogrel tabs 75mg 30	£1.12	+3	£1.38	±0
Enalapril tabs 20mg 28	£0.28	+8	£0.41	+15
Finasteride tabs 5mg 28	£0.84	-1	£1.07	+2
Fluoxetine caps 20mg 30	£0.19	+27	£0.31	+6
Fosinopril tabs 20mg 28	£1.42	+1	£1.85	±0
Glimepiride tabs 4mg 30	£0.48	-6	£0.78	-3
Lamotrigine tabs 100mg 56	£1.92	+9	£2.52	+5
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£0.75	±0	£0.90	+2
Lisinopril tabs 20mg 28	£0.30	±0	£0.41	+3
Losartan tabs 50mg 28	£0.36	+3	£0.69	+36
Losartan tabs 100mg 28	£0.51	+31	£1.11	+54
Metformin tabs 500mg 84	£0.45	±0	£0.61	-3
Mirtazapine tabs 30mg 28	£0.78	-1	£1.04	+3
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	£0.54	±0	£0.64	-1
Ondansetron tabs 4mg 30	£2.35	+4	£4.02	+2
Pantoprazole tabs 20mg 28	£0.41	±0	£0.53	+1
Paroxetine tabs 20mg 30	£0.84	+5	£1.14	+9
Pramipexole tabs 180µg 30	£0.73	-5	£1.62	+8
Pramipexole tabs 700µg 30	£2.54	±0	£5.09	+5

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Pravastatin tabs 40mg 28	£1.04	+25	£1.35	+6
Ramipril caps 10mg 28	£0.48	+2	£0.59	+3
Risedronate tabs 35mg 4	£0.53	-5	£0.72	-5
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.76	+10	£1.23	+7
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£0.56	-10	£1.14	-13
Simvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.19	-10	£0.26	+1
Simvastatin tabs 40mg 28	£0.26	-10	£0.42	+2
Sumatriptan tabs 50mg 6	£0.65	±0	£0.95	+3
Tamsulosin caps 400µg 30	£0.73	±0	£0.94	+1
Terbinafine tabs 250mg 14	£0.96	+2	£1.26	+4
Topiramate tabs 50mg 60	£1.22	±0	£2.12	-5
Topiramate tabs 100mg 60	£1.97	-3	£2.93	-8
Venlafaxine tabs 37.5mg 56	£1.54	-6	£2.22	+4
Venlafaxine XL caps 75mg 28	£0.52	+16	£1.07	+38
Venlafaxine XL caps 150mg 28	£1.11	-14	£2.10	+20

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