

Valsartan prices double amid supply issues

UK prices of valsartan capsules doubled in June. This caused the Department of Health to grant price concessions for the products over and above their pharmacy reimbursement prices listed in category M of the Drug Tariff. As Figure 1 shows, the average price of 28-capsule packs of valsartan 80mg shot up by 98% in June to £6.32 (US\$10.84). This was slightly less than the 114% increase in the lowest trade price on offer to independent pharmacists and dispensing doctors. Average prices for the other two capsule strengths experienced similar rises, with those for the 40mg form leaping by 130% to £5.50 and for the 160mg strength by 91% to £8.07 (see Figure 3).

The Department of Health's response was to grant price concessions of £8.50 for the 40mg capsule strength, £10.32 for the 80mg strength and £10.50 for the 160mg version. Pharmacists were thus able to

achieve average dispensing margins of 35%, 39% and 23%, respectively. The three products' Drug Tariff reimbursement prices were £1.46, £2.03 and £2.37 in June, indicating dispensing losses without the concessions.

Valsartan was one of 12 ingredients on the Department's monthly concession list. Pizotifen, representing two of the biggest price risers according to WaveData, was not among them last month. They were amiloride, cefalexin oral suspension, co-amilofruse, co-amoxiclav, co-tenidone, hydroxocobalamin ampoules, mebeverine, naproxen, piroxicam gel, propranolol and tamoxifen.

The concessionary reimbursement price for hydroxocobalamin 1mg/ml solution for injection in five ampoules was £4.62. This was still below the falling average price of the product, recorded as £5.93 by WaveData, despite the 30% average price reduction (see Figure 2). **G**

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Ciprofloxacin tabs 750mg 10	£0.56	+4	£0.95	-36
Captopril tabs 12.5mg 56	£0.32	+7	£0.43	-34
Hydroxocobalamin 1mg/ml 5	£4.45	-41	£5.93	-30
Cefuroxime tabs 250mg 14	£2.84	+4	£4.57	-29
Captopril tabs 50mg 56	£0.57	+8	£0.71	-27
Ciprofloxacin tabs 250mg 20	£0.37	+37	£0.43	-25

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Pizotifen tabs 0.5mg 28	£0.43	±0	£3.11	+324
Pizotifen tabs 1.5mg 28	£0.87	±0	£3.85	+190
Valsartan caps 40mg 28	£1.32	+560	£5.50	+130
Valsartan caps 160mg 28	£2.30	+16	£8.07	+91
Valsartan tabs 320mg 28	£2.60	+23	£9.92	+61
Pramipexole tabs 350µg 100	£1.95	+11	£30.21	+54

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-31 May 2014 and 1-30 June 2014 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 30 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-31 May

2014 and 1-30 June 2014 in lowest and average UK trade prices of about 748 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 12 data points (Source - WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Anastrozole tabs 1mg 28	£0.99	+5	£1.87	+9
Atorvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.55	-14	£0.93	+2
Buprenorphine tabs 2mg 7	£0.76	+19	£1.88	+4
Candesartan tabs 8mg 28	£0.60	-8	£1.14	+14
Cilostazol tabs 100mg 56	£14.40	-24	£22.38	-4
Clopidogrel tabs 75mg 28	£0.90	-3	£1.25	+4
Cyclizine tabs 50mg 100	£8.39	-1	£11.28	+7
Desloratadine tabs 5mg 30	£0.49	-4	£0.93	-4
Desogestrel tabs 75µg 84	£2.05	-9	£3.11	±0
Donepezil tabs 10mg 28	£0.70	-3	£1.43	+12
Dorzolamide eye drops 2% 5ml	£1.19	+1	£1.94	+6
Entacapone tabs 200mg 30	£5.65	±0	£6.21	-2
Esomeprazole tabs 40mg 28	£2.69	-4	£3.85	+2
Exemestane tabs 25mg 30	£3.25	+4	£6.92	+21
Irbesartan tabs 75mg 28	£0.54	±0	£0.82	±0
Latanoprost eye drops .005% 2.5ml	£0.97	+5	£1.73	+16
Lercanidipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.68	+10	£1.02	-1
Letrozole tabs 2.5mg 14	£1.09	+10	£1.51	-2
Levetiracetam tabs 500mg 60	£2.84	±0	£5.06	+15
Losartan tabs 100mg 28	£0.56	-2	£0.98	+8
Memantine tabs 10mg 28	£4.45	-21	£7.55	-9
Montelukast tabs 10mg 28	£1.17	±0	£1.65	±0
Mycophenolate tabs 500mg 50	£9.22	±0	£11.73	+4
Naratriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£0.92	+24	£1.38	+10
Olanzapine tabs 5mg 28	£0.34	+3	£0.77	+9

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Pioglitazone tabs 15mg 28	£0.45	±0	£0.94	+2
Pramipexole tabs 700µg 30	£0.76	+15	£3.13	+16
Quetiapine tabs 25mg 60	£0.52	-7	£1.09	+6
Rabeprazole tabs 10mg 28	£0.95	-4	£1.77	+3
Raloxifene tabs 60mg 28	£6.50	±0	£9.23	-7
Riluzole tabs 50mg 56	£22.50	±0	£33.93	-1
Risedronate tabs 35mg 4	£0.45	+2	£0.76	+4
Rizatriptan tabs 10mg 3	£1.15	-13	£2.98	+2
Sildenafil tabs 100mg 4	£0.43	+2	£0.72	+6
Telmisartan tabs 80mg 28	£1.15	+10	£1.90	+2
Tolterodine tabs 2mg 56	£1.92	+16	£3.03	+7
Topiramate tabs 25mg 60	£1.99	±0	£2.84	+9
Valsartan caps 80mg 28	£1.84	+114	£6.32	+98
Venlafaxine tabs 75mg 56	£1.72	+2	£2.55	+8
Zolmitriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£0.46	+10	£0.97	+10

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