



# The Bulletin

May 2026

After record breaking numbers of concessions, the concern over medicine shortages is yet again a key topic of discussion amongst stakeholders across the industry. If you follow us on LinkedIn, you will see announcements every time additional Concessions are granted, and this list is available to all WaveData Live customers, under the Reimbursements Prices menu option.

In other news, we see a focus on the future. At the recent EMIG Quarterly Meeting there were some very interesting presentations, including the NHS 10 Year Plan and NICE Evolving for the Future.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the Bulletin.

*Jackie Moss*

Editor



Charles Joynson, WaveData MD, at County Hall, London for the EMIG Quarterly meeting

## WAVEDATA'S PICK OF THIS MONTH'S TOP NEWS STORIES

- **IBMS & Hengrui enter into an agreement**
- **New cancer breakthrough**
- **Pricewatch UK – Apixaban Tops Two Tables As UK Rises Persist In April**
- **MHRA to establish life sciences hub in Belfast**
- **Supply shortages hit Parkinson's drugs**
- **UK startup sends drug-making into space**
- **Charles Joynson, WaveData MD, considers the future of Pharmacies**
- **Illegal medicines seized in 'intensive' operation**
- **Small Pharmacies are set to grow**
- **WaveData Top Ten Branded Product Searches**
- **WaveData Top Ten Generic Product Searches**
- **Future Industry Events**

## **BMS & Hengrui enter into an agreement**

Bristol Myers Squibb has forged close ties with China's Hengrui Pharma, partnering across 13 programmes in oncology, haematology, and immunology in a deal that could be worth a massive \$15.2 billion.

The agreement includes an upfront payment to Hengrui of \$600 million and two payments of \$175 million after one and two years, and will see the two parties cross-license four oncology/haematology candidates from the Chinese firm and four immunology assets from BMS, whilst deploying Hengrui's drug discovery platform to identify and jointly develop five more.

It is one of the strongest examples yet to mark the emergence of the Chinese industry as a major source of innovative drug candidates for big pharma groups, with some analyses suggesting China is now accounting for around a third of all pipeline projects worldwide. It also ties in with a recent trend of such deals going beyond the traditional licensor/licensee relationship towards strategic-level alliances.

Source: Pharmaphorum



## **New cancer breakthrough**

Researchers in the US have recently made breakthroughs showing that AI tools can analyse routine scans and medical records to spot early signs of deadly cancers—such as pancreatic and lung—years before human specialists or visible tumours appear. This represents a significant leap in moving cancer care from late-stage treatment to early intervention.

Mayo Clinic researchers have published a validated AI model called Radiomics-based Early Detection Model (REDMOD) that identified pancreatic cancer on routine CT scans with 73% sensitivity, at a median of 475 days before clinical diagnosis. Radiologists reviewing the same scans identified the cancer with 39% sensitivity.

Pancreatic cancer kills around 92% of those diagnosed in the UK within five years, but there is no population screening programme for the disease. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) dedicated AI medical device framework is still being drafted, with publication confirmed for 2026, but it has not yet been delivered.

Source: The Mirror



## **Pricewatch UK – Apixaban Tops Two Tables As UK Rises Persist In April**

UK generics price rises continued in April, with apixaban rivals to Eliquis topping our Biggest Risers table while also reflecting the steepest increase among our Recent Launches.

Generic Eliquis (apixaban) featured prominently among UK generic price rises in April, according to the latest figures from market researcher WaveData.

Based on UK trade prices to independent pharmacists, WaveData calculated that apixaban 2.5mg tablets in 60-count packs saw their average price more than treble last month, rising by 249% to £2.97 (\$3.99).

And in our table of Recent Launches (see third table in article below), the 5mg strength reflected an even steeper average increase of 252% to £3.98.

“With a record number of [Department of Health and Social Care] concessions announced last month, it’s no wonder that all the products featured in our Biggest Risers table are showing triple-digit average increases,” WaveData commented, continuing a trend seen in the past couple of months.

Source: Generics Bulletin

**GENERICS BULLETIN**  
CITELINE COMMERCIAL

## **MHRA to establish life sciences hub in Belfast**

The MHRA is establishing a new hub in Northern Ireland to support the region’s fast-growing life sciences sector, in a move announced on 13 May 2026. Hosted by Invest Northern Ireland, the hub is intended to strengthen collaboration between the regulator and local healthcare, academic and industry partners.

Northern Ireland is home to around 250 life sciences businesses, supporting 18,000 jobs and contributing £1.1 billion to the economy.

The new Belfast base will allow local organisations to book in-person sessions with MHRA technical experts on areas including innovation pathways and clinical investigations, with signposting to further regulatory support across the product development pipeline. The MHRA said this direct access will help accelerate clinical research and the development of new therapies.

Source: Pharmatimes

**PharmaTimes**

## **Supply shortages hit Parkinson's drugs**

Parkinson's UK warned that pricing, manufacturing and distribution issues are affecting the supply of some Parkinson's drugs - but said the Middle East conflict is not yet a factor.

The charity said five pharmaceutical companies are seeing drug supply issues. The government must treat supply shortages for Parkinson's disease medicines as a "top priority" as patient concerns grow, a UK charity has warned.

In a supply update published by Parkinson's UK on May 11, the charity said that 18 Parkinson's medicines across five drug manufacturers are currently in short supply.

Parkinson's UK is advising people to request prescriptions as early as possible and, where needed, try alternative pharmacies.

Source: Chemist & Druggist



## **UK startup sends drug-making into space**

BioOrbit hopes its drug-crystallisation technology will lead to a self-administered cancer treatment that could save millions.

Onboard a SpaceX flight was a remarkable piece of cargo – a hi-tech box destined for the International Space Station to grow ultra-pure protein crystals, to produce self-injected cancer drugs.

A British startup, BioOrbit, has developed the drug-crystallisation technology at its labs in London and launched Box-E, a compact unit the size of a microwave.

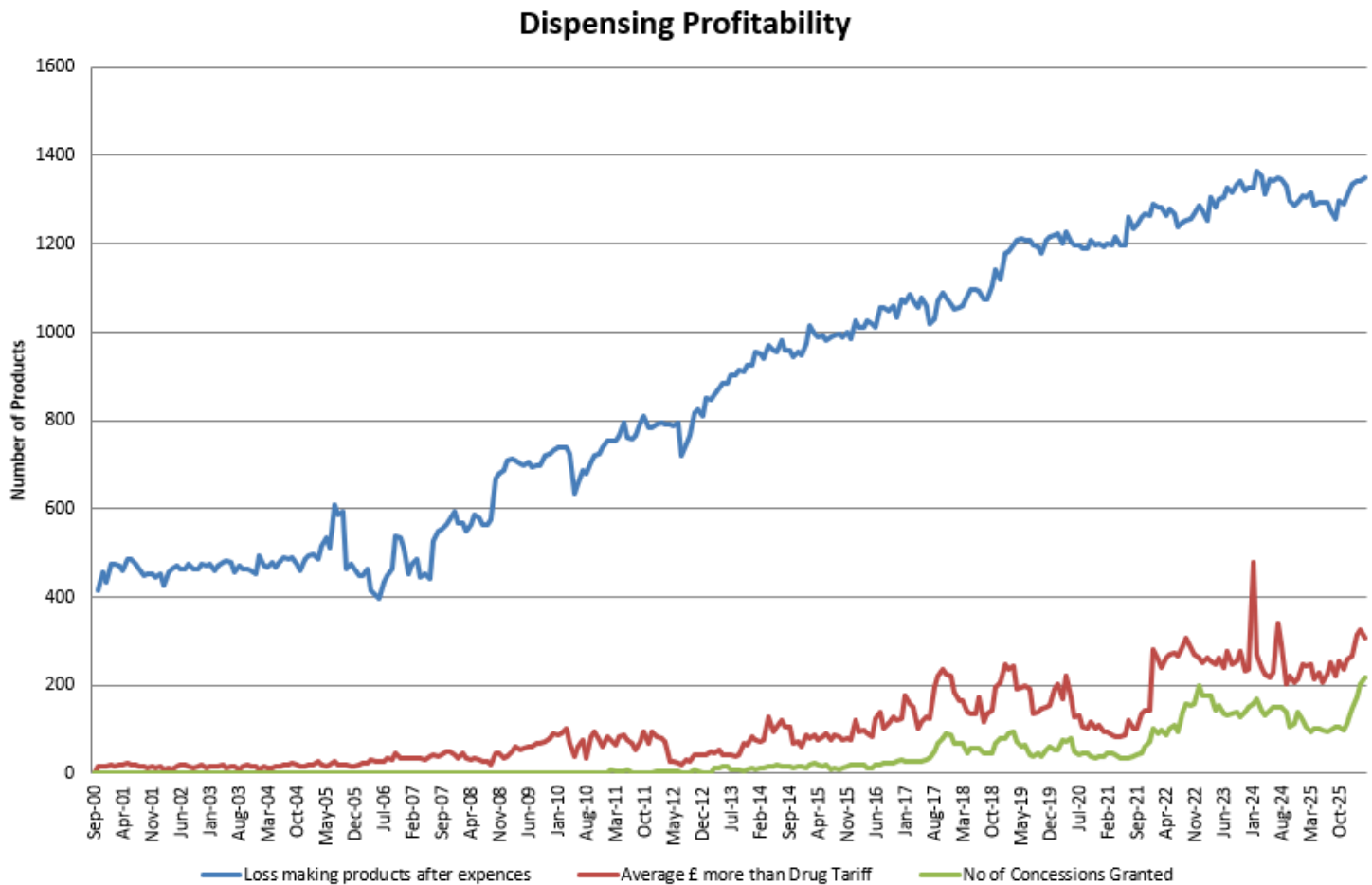
The unit will stay in orbit for about six weeks, where the effective weightlessness, or microgravity, enables pharmaceutical compounds to crystallise into pure, highly stable structures that enable drug formulations not achievable on Earth.

Source: The Guardian



## Charles Joynson, WaveData MD, considers the future of Pharmacies

In April this year the number of concessions reached 216, a record unsurpassed since concessions were launched by DHSC in November 2010. The long term picture is depressing as not only have the number of concessions risen, so too have the number of unprofitable products (where the market price is above the Drug Tariff) and the number of products where profits don't cover Pharmacy costs.



Pharmacies in England face two possible futures: one of severe financial strain and potential contraction, and another of expanded clinical responsibility and deeper integration into the NHS. Independent analysis (by the Pharmaceutical Journal) has suggested that the cost of delivering NHS Pharmacy services (£5.06bn) far exceeds current funding (£2.76bn), leaving a £2.3bn shortfall. Today England has 800 fewer pharmacies than in 2021, with more losing money monthly.

In an attempt to make ends meet (Community Pharmacy England say) many have had to restrict their opening hours, resulting in 75,000 fewer opening hours per week since mid-2023. On top of this an increasing amount of time is spent chasing unobtainable medicines and dealing with irate patients concerned about their health. Without significant new investment, England can expect to see more closures, further reduced access, and increased pressure on GPs and A&E.

Despite the financial strain, Pharmacies are increasingly central to NHS strategy in that Pharmacy First has strong patient demand and Independent prescribing is transforming the NHS. The shift toward prevention means Pharmacies will play a larger role in health, self-care and management.

In the long term, the future for surviving Pharmacies may be rosy, but the £2.3bn funding gap may leave the 'bitter enders' damaged and unable to fulfil the Government's expectations, limping on despite the challenges, not because of them.



## **Illegal medicines seized in 'intensive' operation**

The MHRA and UK Border Force have cracked down on the illegal medicines trade in an intensive 14-day international operation.

Over two million doses of illicit medicines with an estimated value of £4.6 million have been seized in a 14-day enforcement operation carried out in the UK as part of Operation Pangea XVIII, the world's largest coordinated initiative aimed at tackling the illegal medicines trade.

Over half of the medicines seized were controlled drugs, with the remainder classified as prescription-only medicines in the UK. The products most commonly intercepted this year were associated with sedation, pain relief, and treatments for erectile dysfunction.

Source: GOV UK



## **Small Pharmacies are set to grow**

Small bricks-and-mortar pharmacies in England have seen a net 2.5% growth over the last nine months, according to NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) figures.

According to the latest available data, the number of small pharmacies - those belonging to a chain of less than six premises - grew from 4,940 to 5,067 between last August and April.

Meanwhile, large pharmacies - those in a chain of 100 or more premises - saw a 1.9% decrease in branch numbers over the same period. There were a net 60 closures of large pharmacy premises in total, falling from 3,227 to 3,167.

Medium-sized pharmacies - those in a chain with 6 to 99 premises - saw the biggest decline, with a net 108 closures. Numbers fell by almost 6% over the past nine months, from 1,814 to 1,706.

Source: Chemist & Druggist



## Top Ten Branded Product Searches: WaveData Live

These are the most commonly investigated Branded products on WaveData Live in the last 35 days. Both UK and PI prices were viewed, average prices are shown.

Product	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
Invokana Tabs 100mg 30	£27.23	£26.87	£27.48	£29.47
Bactroban Ointment 2% 15g	£4.67	£4.42	£4.42	£4.23
Ganfort Eye Drops 0.3mg/ml + 5mg/ml 3ml	£10.98	£11.98	£11.21	£12.72
Avamys Nasal Spray 1 (120 Doses)	£6.26	£6.14	£6.14	£6.05
Invokana Tabs 300mg 30	£36.80	£36.32	£36.18	£36.64
Dovobet Gel 60g	£33.29	£30.97	£30.24	£32.23
Hiprex Tabs 100	£28.82	£28.80	£29.05	£29.34
Nasonex Nasal Spray 50mcg 1 (140 Doses)	£5.48	£5.28	£5.15	£5.37
Versatis Medicated Plasters 5% 30	£69.79	£69.89	£69.95	£69.25
Seretide Evohaler CFC Free 125mcg 1 (120 Doses)	£20.68	£20.48	£20.40	£20.62

Prices correct at time of compilation, but may be subject to change.



## Top Ten Generic Product Searches: WaveData Live

These are the most commonly investigated Generic products on WaveData Live in the last 35 days. Both UK and PI prices were viewed, average prices are shown.

Product	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
Dapagliflozin Tabs 10mg 28	£2.91	£2.24	£4.01	£6.31
Apixaban Tabs 5mg 56	£0.87	£1.16	£4.00	£5.62
Atorvastatin Tabs 20mg 28	£0.28	£0.27	£0.35	£0.40
Apixaban Tabs 2.5mg 60	£0.72	£0.96	£2.98	£5.21
Omeprazole Caps 20mg 28	£0.46	£0.43	£0.40	£0.45
Bisoprolol Fumarate Tabs 1.25mg 28	£0.50	£1.73	£3.71	£4.59
Atorvastatin Tabs 10mg 28	£0.18	£0.17	£0.19	£0.26
Atorvastatin Tabs 40mg 28	£0.37	£0.37	£0.48	£0.54
Latanoprost Eye Drops 0.005% 2.5ml	£1.91	£2.02	£2.00	£2.37
Metformin Tabs 500mg 28	£0.26	£0.21	£0.18	£0.38

Prices correct at time of compilation, but may be subject to change.



## FUTURE INDUSTRY EVENTS

Engineering biology is transforming healthcare and the UK	2nd June 26	Edinburgh
PING Conference	8th June 26	London
euroPLX Summer	8th June 26	Poland
BioUK Science Social, Oxford and the Oxford Ventures Tour	11th June 26	Oxford
7th International Conference on Rare Diseases (RARE2026)	17th June 26	Poland
The Aesthetic Show	26th June 26	London
5th International Cancer & Oncology Research Conference	29th June 26	Germany
Priorities for the healthcare workforce in England	6th July 26	Online
Next steps for AI use in life sciences	14th July 26	Online
Next steps for the use of patient data in the UK	3rd Sept 26	Online
International Clinical Trials Methodology Conference	14th Sept 26	Birmingham
Expopharm	15th Sept 26	Munich
International Society of Pharmacovigilance (ISoP)	22nd Sept 26	Costa Rica
BioTechX	6th Oct 26	Basel
The 3rd European Congress on Dermato-Oncology2026	12th Nov 26	Netherlands

WaveData's Bulletin is a free-of-charge monthly service. Please let us know if you would like an article considered for inclusion, or if you have any colleagues who would like to be added to our subscribers list. You can view previous editions of The Bulletin in the [WaveData Knowledge Base](#).

If you need any assistance, or would like to find out more about our pricing or prescription services please get in touch.

### Our Services:

- [WaveData Live](#): UK & EI Pharma Pricing 1-35 days
- [WaveData Pharma TouchStone](#): UK & EI Pharma Pricing up to 6 months
- [WaveData BPPI](#): UK Pharma Pricing up to 10 years
- [WaveData ScriptMap](#): GP Prescribing Data updated monthly

Editor: Jackie Moss

Contact: [bulletin@wavedata.co.uk](mailto:bulletin@wavedata.co.uk)

