



The Bulletin

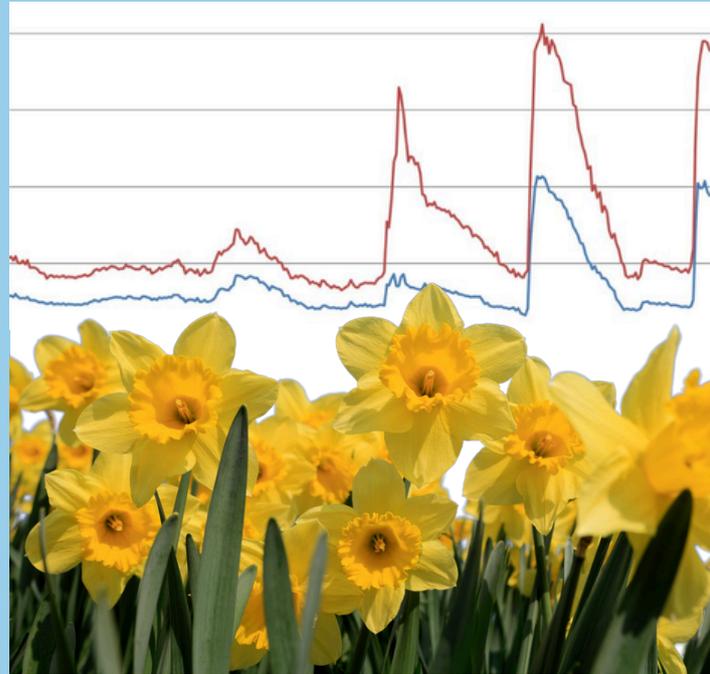
March 2026

Spring is in the air at WaveData HQ, with lots of daffodils in bloom on the route to the office. The temperature here in Southend-on-Sea has been very up and down, much like the prices of Generics which our Managing Director, Charles Joynson has been analysing. You can read more about long term price variability in Charles' article below.

We hope you've had a good March, and enjoy this issue of the Bulletin which includes the usual summary of news and events.

Jackie Moss

Editor



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

- Pharmacy sector leaders worried about medicine supply
- Huge gaps in antibiotics for children
- Pricewatch UK – Generic Prozac Tops UK Rises in February as Concessions Mount
- Pipeline of new drugs is worryingly thin
- A pharmacy group is set to become the first in Northern Ireland to move to a hub and spoke dispensing model
- Pharmacies sound alarm over meningitis jab shortage
- A deep dive into long term price variability by WaveData MD, Charles Joynson
- Pharmacies slash weekend opening hours
- MHRA and NICE come together to deliver new medicines faster
- WaveData Top Ten Branded Product Searches
- WaveData Top Ten Generic Product Searches
- Future Industry Events

Pharmacy sector leaders worried about medicine supply

The ongoing war in the Middle East is disrupting the flow of critical medicines, imperilling supply routes for cancer drugs and other treatments that require refrigeration, forcing companies to reroute flights and find overland access into the region.

In addition, many common drugs, including aspirin, paracetamol, ibuprofen and a range of antibiotics, rely on petroleum-based ingredients as well as other components sourced from the Middle East.

The delays in delivery of oncology medicines can have dire consequences for patients, who might be forced to restart a course of therapy, or see their cancer worsen.

With the war in its third week, various pharmaceutical organisations in the UK have raised concerns regarding medicine supply and the availability of essential medicines for patients, and fear that the challenges would increase if the war is prolonged.

Medicines UK chief executive Mark Samuels said, "The escalating conflict in Iran, and the wider instability across the Middle East, poses a significant risk to future UK medicine supplies.

Source: Pharmacy Biz



Huge gaps in antibiotics for children

According to new analysis, Antibiotic production from pharmaceutical companies has significantly slowed in the last five years, leaving children in low- and middle-income countries particularly exposed to hard-to-treat infections.

The report by the Access to Medicine Foundation comes amid a growing global crisis of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), where the drugs used to treat deadly infections are no longer effective. Previous research shows that AMR contributes to more than four million deaths each year and this number is expected to rise to more than eight million by 2050.

Despite this growing threat, the number of candidate antimicrobial drugs in the pipeline of large research-based pharmaceutical companies has shrunk by 35 per cent since 2021, according to the 2026 Antimicrobial Resistance Benchmark report.

The report particularly highlights a stark lack of antibiotics formulated for children. Only 14 per cent of medicines under development by the companies assessed are for those aged under five. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 17 countries have no children's antibiotics available from these companies.

Source: Medical Life Sciences



Pricewatch UK – Generic Prozac Tops UK Rises in February as Concessions Mount

A host of unusually high price increases for UK generics in February led the Department of Health and Social Care to issue the highest number of price concessions seen in almost three years.

Anyone following our Pricewatch articles closely for the past few months will have noticed a gradual but unmistakable trend: the price rises for UK generics reflected in our Biggest Risers table have been becoming steeper, with more and more products seeing their average trade prices more than double on a monthly basis.

February 2026 sees those increases reach a new high for recent months, with market researcher WaveData calculating – based on trade prices to UK independent pharmacists – that fluoxetine 20mg capsules in 30-count packs, the generic version of Prozac, jumped in price by an average of 835% to £3.74 (\$4.95).

“The highest price we saw in February was £7.45,” WaveData revealed, adding that “as of March 10 it stands at £5.41.”

Other steep increases in February include leflunomide 10mg tablets in packs of 30, which leapt by 590% to £9.24. “We started to see hefty price increases for this anti-rheumatic drug from the 16th of the month,” WaveData indicated, “with the highest price recorded being £28.99, which, so far, remains unchanged in March.”

Source: Generics Bulletin

GENERICS BULLETIN
CITELINE COMMERCIAL

Pipeline of new drugs is worryingly thin

The pipeline of new drugs to fight superbugs remains “worryingly thin” and has shrunk by 35% in the last five years, predicting the annual number of deaths linked to drug-resistant infections globally will double to 8 million by 2050.

The number of antimicrobial projects from large pharma companies has shrunk by 35% over the past five years, from 92 to 60 medicines in development, according to a report from the Access to Medicine Foundation (AMF), a Netherlands-based non-profit group, backed by the Wellcome Trust. Only five medicines are in development for children under five, who are more vulnerable to infections.

“Overall, the research and development pipeline remains worryingly thin, and industry investment has lost momentum,” said Jayasree K Iyer, the foundation’s chief executive. She described drug resistance as the biggest single threat to healthcare worldwide.

Source: The Guardian

**The
Guardian**

A pharmacy group is set to become the first in Northern Ireland to move to a hub and spoke dispensing model

MediCare Pharmacy Group, which has 52 branches across the country, said it will begin instillation for the new model of dispensing original pack medication in late spring. There will then be a phased rollout of the hub and spoke model which is expected to start soon after, the pharmacy said.

The hub will be based in Belfast and will feature two automated dispensing lines which can label around 3,000 packs of medication per hour. It will also have guided sorting and automated bagging and toting capabilities.

All medication processed at the hub will be delivered back to pharmacy spokes the following day, MediCare said.

MediCare pharmacy group managing director Michael Guerin said: 'Our investment in a FLOWRx hub is another example of the way we use cutting-edge technology to improve the speed, accuracy and dispensing of the services we provide.'

Source: The Pharmacist



Pharmacies sound alarm over meningitis job shortage

Worried parents are contacting pharmacies in an "increasingly desperate" effort to get their children vaccinated against meningitis after the outbreak in Kent.

According to a survey conducted by the National Pharmacy Association, 87 per cent of chemists had seen a surge in demand for vaccines from worried parents.

Pharmacists are facing a shortage of meningitis jabs amid an "unprecedented" surge. The MenB jab is available privately at high street and supermarket pharmacies for roughly £150 per dose.

However, many have already reported running out of stock and have said they are unable to order more from wholesalers.

Source: The Sun

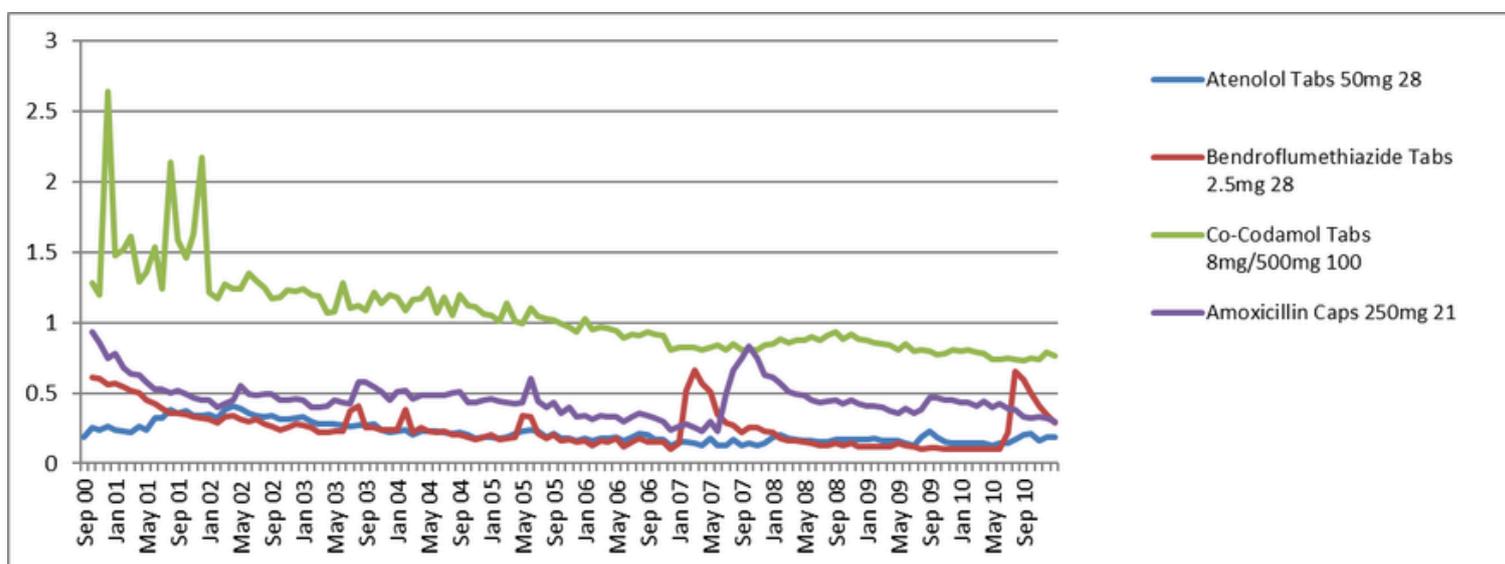


A deep dive into long term price variability by WaveData MD, Charles Joynson

If you follow us on Linked In, you will have seen a number of previous articles looking at the erratic behaviour of generic prices. Now it's time to delve a little deeper. Firstly, we identified products which are very commonly prescribed and dispensed between the year 2000 and 2026. We have taken three date ranges and selected the most common generic products in each.

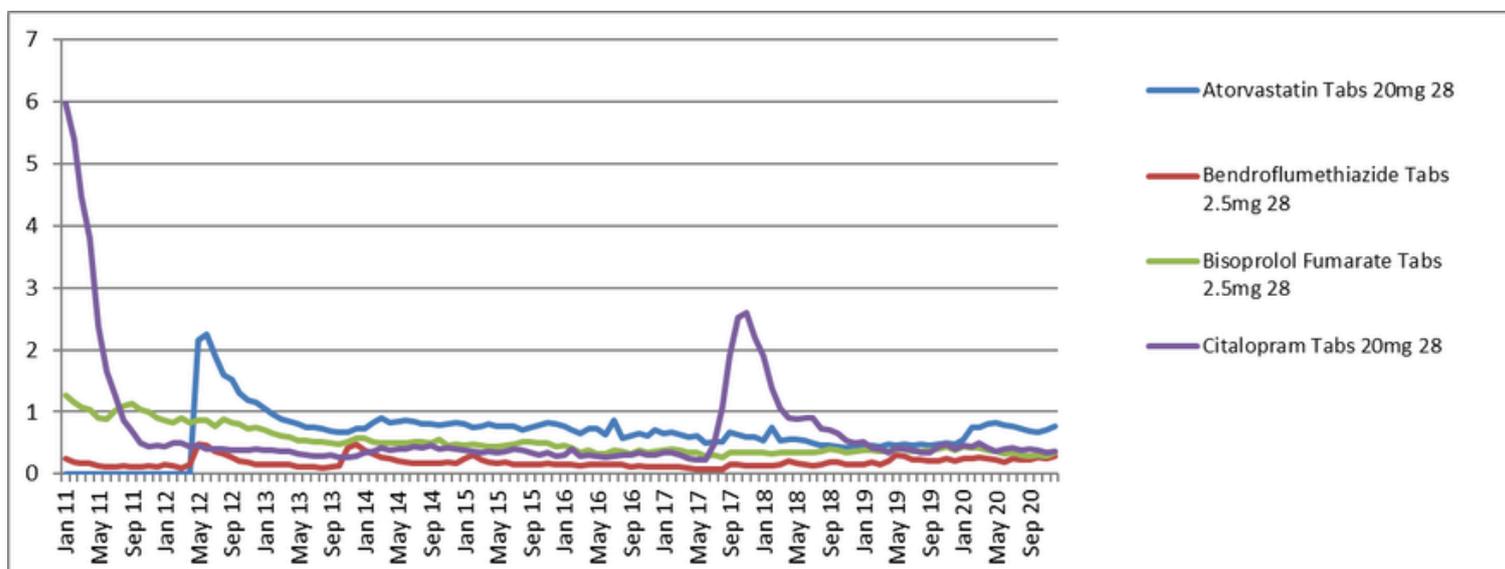
2000 to 2010

This first graph shows that prices were reasonably stable during this period. With the exception of a couple of bounces, prices were fairly consistent month on month.



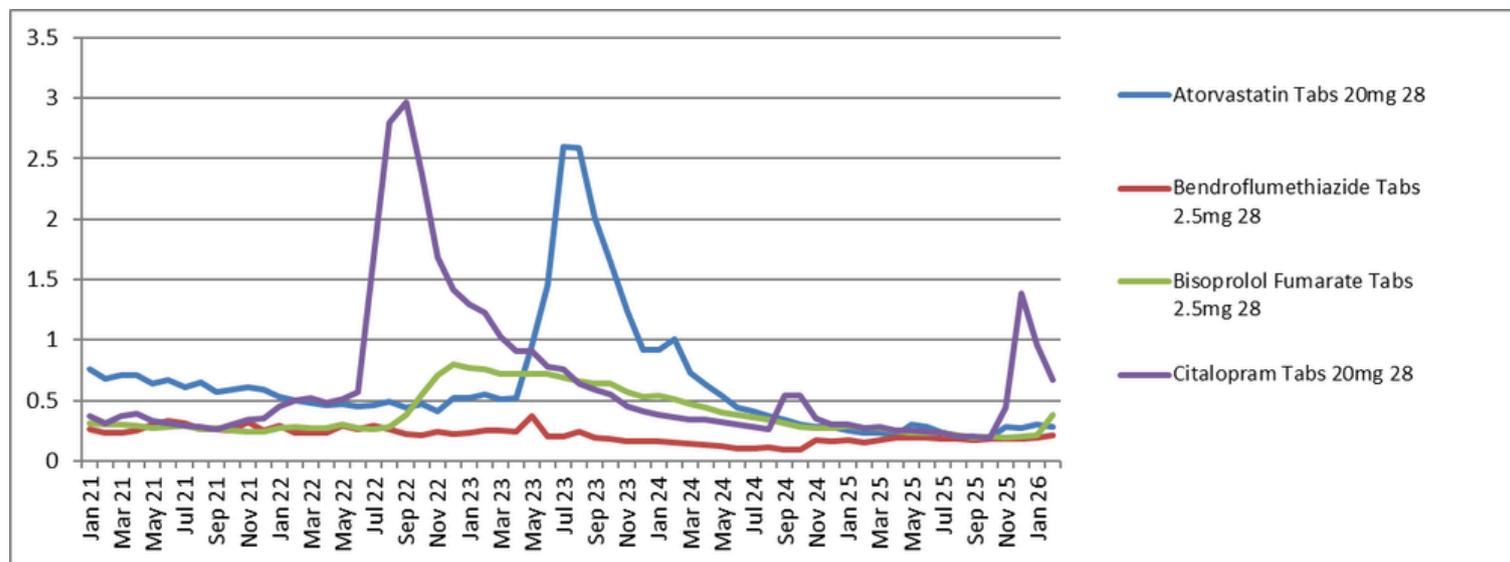
2011-2020

This second graph shows that the number of price changes was starting to increase and the degree of change seems to be much higher, in particular with the peaks in May 2012 for Atorvastatin Tabs 20mg 28 and in October 2017 for Citalopram Tabs 20mg 28.



2021 - 2026

The final and third graph shows that the price changes are more frequent and more extreme. Further analysis may well help us identify a predictable cycle for Atorvastatin Tabs 20mg 28 and Citalopram Tabs 20mg 28.



We think a lot of this increase in price variability stems from the squeeze being put on the Drug Tariff reimbursement prices in order to reduce the medicines tax bill. The extreme price variations are symptoms of product shortages, and it is patients who will suffer most.

The increasing challenges making it more and more difficult to make a profit from generic pharmaceuticals is driving some Pharmacies towards closure, and some manufacturers to withdraw from the UK and focus on other markets.

The whole Generics industry is moving into a land of greater risk and lower profitability, for the whole supply chain.

For more insights from Charles, follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and check out the [Articles](#) on our website.

Pharmacies slash weekend opening hours

Pharmacies are reducing their opening hours on Saturday and Sundays due to an NHS funding crisis and some are shutting down over the weekend altogether

New analysis by the National Pharmacy Association (NPA) shows one in six pharmacies in England - around 1,600 stores - have cut opening hours on weekends. Eight per cent have decided to shut entirely on Saturdays and Sundays over the last four years.

The NPA blames a lack of NHS funding and says reduced opening hours were forcing patients to travel long distances to get prescriptions or resort to A&E. It reports some patients have to drive for almost an hour to their nearest chemist.

Olivier Picard, NPA chair, said: "This is yet more evidence that the pharmacy network in England is creaking at the seams after facing deep cuts over a number of years. Sadly, the real losers are the millions of patients these pharmacies serve, particularly those in rural areas, who are forced to travel long distances or even go to hospital if they need a prescription or advice for a minor health issue on a Sunday or late at night."

Source: The Mirror



MHRA and NICE come together to deliver new medicines faster

Patients in England will gain access to some new medicines three to six months earlier under a major new streamlined approval process launched jointly by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

The new aligned pathway, launching on the 1st April, is designed to speed up patient access and give life sciences companies greater certainty when planning development and regulatory strategies. It delivers on commitments in the Government's 10 Year Health Plan for England and the Life Sciences Sector Plan, which set out a shared ambition for MHRA and NICE to work more closely in accelerating innovative treatments to the NHS.

Historically, MHRA licensing and NICE value assessments happened sequentially, often resulting in delays between regulatory approval and NHS access. Under the aligned pathway, NICE will bring its decision-making forward to run alongside the MHRA's licensing process.

This means that licensing decisions and value assessments will be completed in parallel, allowing clinicians and patients to benefit from earlier access once a medicine is authorised.

Source: National Health Executive



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 | Dec-25 | Jan-26 | Feb-26 | Mar-26 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Invokana Tabs 100mg 30 | £28.47 | £27.32 | £27.23 | £27.16 |
| EpiPen Injection 0.3mg 1 | £60.56 | £60.53 | £60.50 | £60.54 |
| Avamys Nasal Spray 1 (120 Doses) | £6.24 | £6.25 | £6.26 | £6.15 |
| Cosopt iMulti Eye Drops Pres Free 20mg/ml + 5mg/ml 10ml | £17.45 | £18.70 | £20.29 | £18.43 |
| Bactroban Ointment 2% 15g | £4.23 | £4.38 | £4.67 | £4.53 |
| Trajenta Tabs 5mg 28 | £32.20 | £32.21 | £32.13 | £32.18 |
| Gaviscon Advance Peppermint Liquid 500ml | £7.31 | £7.27 | £7.28 | £8.17 |
| Elocon Ointment 0.1% 30g | £3.69 | £3.79 | £3.95 | £3.91 |
| Fobumix Easyhaler 160mcg/4.5mcg 1 (120 Doses) | £19.30 | £19.31 | £19.43 | £19.37 |
| Ganfort Eye Drops 0.3mg/ml + 5mg/ml 3ml | £10.20 | £10.22 | £10.98 | £11.83 |

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 | Dec-25 | Jan-26 | Feb-26 | Mar-26 |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Bisoprolol Fumarate Tabs 1.25mg 28 | £0.35 | £0.35 | £0.50 | £1.51 |
| Sertraline Tabs 50mg 28 | £0.40 | £0.45 | £0.63 | £0.52 |
| Fluoxetine Caps 20mg 30 | £0.34 | £0.49 | £3.49 | £2.72 |
| Famotidine Tabs 20mg 28 | £1.65 | £1.65 | £2.17 | £2.36 |
| Atorvastatin Tabs 20mg 28 | £0.27 | £0.30 | £0.28 | £0.28 |
| Zopiclone Tabs 7.5mg 28 | £0.34 | £0.34 | £0.48 | £0.75 |
| Sertraline Tabs 100mg 28 | £0.55 | £0.57 | £0.73 | £0.62 |
| Metformin Tabs 500mg 28 | £0.14 | £0.19 | £0.26 | £0.23 |
| Omeprazole Caps 20mg 28 | £0.42 | £0.43 | £0.46 | £0.45 |
| Apixaban Tabs 5mg 56 | £0.61 | £0.56 | £0.87 | £1.03 |

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



FUTURE INDUSTRY EVENTS

| | | |
|--|----------------|-----------|
| Digital Labs Summit Europe 2026 | 15th Apr 2026 | Berlin |
| Next steps for rare diseases in England | 16th Apr 2026 | Online |
| Next steps for tackling antimicrobial resistance in the UK | 21st Apr 2026 | Online |
| Making Pharmaceuticals and Neutraceuticals Conference | 21st Apr 2026 | Coventry |
| Next steps for rare diseases in England | 22nd Apr 2026 | Online |
| Pharma Europe 2026 | 22nd Apr 2026 | Barcelona |
| Next steps for 10 Year Health Plan delivery and NHS reform | 27th Apr 2026 | Online |
| Next steps for net zero and sustainability in the NHS | 28th Apr 2026 | Online |
| Next steps for cancer policy in England | 30th Apr 2026 | Online |
| IPU National Pharmacy Conference 2026 | 9th May 2026 | Carlow |
| 15th edition of the Clinical Pharmacy Congress | 9th May 2026 | London |
| Priorities for women's health in England | 15th May 2026 | Online |
| Next steps for the health and social care system in Scotland | 18th May 2026 | Online |
| PING Conference | 8th Jun 2026 | London |
| 7th International Conference on Rare Diseases (RARE2026) | 17th Jun 2026 | Poland |
| The Aesthetic Show | 26th Jun 2026 | London |
| Priorities for the healthcare workforce in England | 6th July 2026 | Online |
| Expopharm | 15th Sept 2026 | Munich |
| BioTechX | 6th Oct 2026 | Basel |

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- [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

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