

## Dispensing GPs thwart market pressure from shortages

Data for the end of December reveals that dispensing doctors continue to beat pharmacies for the prices they can negotiate on generics and parallel imports, and are even increasing margin on purchases – product shortages during the year notwithstanding.

Looking at the final month of the year, most noteworthy were the three pairs of formulations featuring in both the price ‘fallers’ and ‘risers’. Fallers include aspirin disp, rivastigmine and trazodone, and the risers: imipramine, isosorbide dinitrate and venlafaxine XL. Quinine sulphate tabs had a foot in each camp, according to this exclusive DDA member analysis from Wavedata.

### Fallers

A temporary reduction in the Drug Tariff and the number of competitive offers have made aripiprazole oral solution 1mg/ml 150ml an interesting product to watch: a 10 per cent fall in the Drug Tariff in December was reflected in suppliers’ prices. The best deals below £10.00 in December were from DE, Nupharm, Target, Eclipse, Ethigen, Alliance Healthcare, Trident and OTC Direct, and in January from DE, Target, Nupharm, Numark, Eclipse, Trident, Ethigen, OTC Direct and Alliance Healthcare.

Several suppliers also reduced prices for aspirin disp tabs 75mg x100 in December, in advance of a reduction in the Drug Tariff at the beginning of January (from £3.07 to £2.75). The best deals on offer below £0.50 in December were from OTC Direct, DE, Ethigen, Eclipse, Alliance Healthcare, Numark, Nupharm, AAH and Trident and in January from OTC Direct, Ethigen, Eclipse, DE, Target, Munro, Trident, Numark, AAH and Nupharm.

December saw fluctuation in suppliers’ prices for cimetidine tabs 400mg x60, but the overall trend for dispensing doctors was for prices to reduce. The best offers below £2.00 in December were from Eclipse, DE, Target, Nupharm, Numark, Trident and Ethigen, and in January from Eclipse, DE, Nupharm, Numark and Ethigen.

### Risers

Big price rises for famciclovir tabs 500mg x14 in December, which continued into January, may have prompted a small rise in the Drug Tariff at the beginning of 2020 (from £179.83 to £185.00). However, as two key wholesalers virtually tripled their prices in December, supply problems are possibly also in play. The best deals in December and January below £100.00 were from Numark, Nupharm and Eclipse.

Price rises and a £2.99 December concession price saw the average price of imipramine tabs 25mg x28 rise by 120 per cent in December. The best deals in December below £1.20 were from Munro, Target, Ethigen, Eclipse, DE, Alliance Healthcare and OTC Direct, and in January from Alliance Healthcare and OTC Direct.

Drug tariff increases in December and January for isosorbide dinitrate tabs 10mg x56 along with widespread supplier increases saw dispensing doctor prices rise on average by 117 per cent. The best deals below £11.00 in December were from Eclipse, Ethigen, Elite, Nupharm, Numark, Trident, DE and AAH, and in January so far from Eclipse, Trident, Nupharm, Numark, Ethigen, DE and AAH.