

## GPs start the generics-buying year with a head start on pharmacy

January saw dispensing GPs increase the favourable differential between their buying prices and those of pharmacy by more than £5. However, in contrast to the end of the year – and in a repeat of the beginning of last year – GPs' PI buying deals fell slightly short of those available to pharmacy: by an average of 53p more. This may suggest that at this time of year GPs are better to hold off buying PIs until prices swing back in their favour.

In terms of generics, the first month of the year reveals little in the way of common threads among the risers and fallers. The only products which stood out among the fallers were three packs of levetiracetam and two packs of mirtazapine tabs, and in the risers, two packs of venlafaxine tabs. Aspirin disp tabs was noteworthy for having one pack in both the price risers and the fallers.

### Fallers

A small fall in the drug tariff (£1.06 to £1.00) at the beginning of January triggered price drops for doxazosin tabs 1mg x28. This triggered at least four suppliers to drop prices, although many others held their inventory at December prices. However, the overall effect was a 44 per cent average price drop. The best offers in January and at the start of February at £0.25 or less were Phoenix, Nupharm, Numark, Beta, Purepharm and DE.

Also falling by an average 40 per cent during the month were mirtazapine tabs 30mg x28, despite an 8p rise in the January tariff price to £1.59, and price concessions granted by the DHSC in both December and January. Over 10 companies made price cuts and the best deals below £2.00 were available from Phoenix, Cambrian, Bestway, Elite, Trident, Eclipse, Ethigen, Beta, Munro, Trident, Purepharm, Medihealth Northern and AAH.

The average price of perindopril tabs 4mg x30 fell by 39 per cent in January, with six companies making price cuts. The best deals below £1.50 were from Target, Eclipse and Purepharm.

### Risers

The average price of cimetidine tabs 400mg x60 increased by 110 per cent in January due to a number of suppliers significantly increasing prices. The best deals below £2.00 were from Eclipse, DE, Nupharm, Numark and Ethigen.

Concessions published by the DHSC in both December and January supported higher venlafaxine tabs 37.5mg x56 and 75mg x56 pack, reflecting increased prices in the market.

For both lines, the best deals below £5.00 were offered by Teva and Nupharm.