

Pregabalin stars among October's price fallers

By Wavedata in association with the Dispensing Doctors' Association



Pregabalin caps were the principle highlight of October's risers and fallers, with seven packs among the fallers. Both the average market and concession prices have fallen in October, and this looks likely to lead to continued price reductions as the number of market offers has increased, indicating an increase in stock availability.

Looking at the spreadsheet and the trend graphs for generics and parallel imports, it is clear there are differences between the pharmacy and dispensing practice markets: in pharmacy, the purchase lines appear smooth, which may indicate that suppliers change their prices carefully and strategically, while the dispensing doctor lines on both graphs have more peaks and troughs. This could either indicate the sporadic nature of dispensing GP deals or it indicates the difficulty overstretched GPs have in negotiating effectively with suppliers, compared to the power of professional buyers in the pharmacy world.

Fallers

Despite a small increase in the English drug tariff from £8.99 to £9.42 at the beginning of November, dispensing doctor prices for cyanocobalamin tabs 50mcg x50 fell by 77 per cent in October. This was primarily due to a reduction in the number of very high market prices on offer from at least two full line suppliers. Offers below £0.25 were available from DE, Eclipse, Ethigen, Cross Pharma, B & S, Beta, Strathclyde, Aver Generics, AAH and Numark.

In October prices for ciprofibrate tabs 100mg x28 fell by 62 per cent as a number of very high prices disappeared from the market and a number of suppliers reduce their prices. Prices below £15.00 were on offer from DE, Beta, AAH, Numark, Mawdsleys, Sangers, Ethigen, Strathclyde, Lexon and OTC Direct.

Price reductions in paracetamol suppositories 500mg x10 were caused by widespread supplier price reductions on October, and the best offers below £10.00 were available from AAH, Sangers, Numark, Ethigen, Strathclyde, OTC Direct, Cross Pharma, B & S, Lexon and Alliance Healthcare.

Risers

In October virtually every supplier increased prices for perindopril 2mg x30 tablet pack. Seven of these prices were above the concession price of £7.50. A number of companies advertised stock at less than £1.00 in October, but this may run out if prices continue to rise. These companies included Lexon, Purepharm, Strathclyde, Alliance Healthcare, Teva and Phoenix.

Like the 2mg, the 4mg also had a concession price granted in October and most suppliers increased their prices. There were 11 prices above the £8.00 concession price in October, and the number of prices below £1.00 declined from 35 in September to 16 in October. The few companies with prices below the £1.00 in October included Axis Medicare, Target, Lexon, Teva, Phoenix, Alliance Healthcare and OTC Direct.

Felodipine tabs 5mg x28 saw price increases from the few suppliers left in the market in October. The longer term trend is toward fewer market offers (from 18 in July to just 9 in October) and therefore probably less stock. Only Lexon, Alliance Healthcare and OTC Direct had offers of below £2.00 in August.