

## Pregabalin supply problems make their presence felt in August



Supply problems following the entry of pregabalin caps into category M in August – and subsequent concession pricing – have conflated to see seven lines of the drug join the risers for August. The price of pregabalin caps 50mg x84 rose by an average 694 per cent in August as the drug tariff price fell and a concession price of £19.95 was granted. Most companies increased prices. By the end of the month the difference between the highest and lowest prices was over £94, leaving little chance for any buyer to find low-priced stock without making a phone call. The companies making the most offers to the market – presumably because of a larger stock holding – were Alliance and Numark.

### Risers

Also notable among the risers in August are terbinafine tabs 250mgx28, due to a gradual decrease in the number of market offers – from 59 in May to 39 in August – and substantial price increases by a wide range of companies still in the market: factors that may indicate supply problems. A concession price was given for the 250mgx14 tablet pack. With most prices rising very quickly the only prices below £16 were from Teva, Accord and Trident. However, these may be legacy prices and no longer available going forward. The best offers below £20 (a more realistic price) are from Numark, Ethigen, DE, Eclipse and AAH.

In August rasagiline tabs 1mgx28 prices rose by an average of 815 per cent as the drug tariff price rose, and a concession granted. However, this seems a work in progress with 10 companies charging more than the concession price and very nearly all of them above the drug tariff. As with terbinafine there were a few low, legacy prices around, but the majority were above £10 by the end of the month.

### Fallers

Dispensing GPs and pharmacies saw cuts for ciprofibrate tabs 100mgx28 and the best deals below £13 were available from Munro, AAH, Mawdsleys, Trident, Beta, Sangers, DE and Target.

The English drug tariff price for fluoxetine oral solution 20mg/5mlx70ml saw a 10 per cent decrease as average purchase prices decreased by 46 per cent. Many suppliers were selling above the tariff price in August, however, deals below the £2.56 tariff price were on offer from Munro, Ethigen, AAH, Target, B&S and Trident.

Price decreases for domperidone suspension 1mg/1ml x200ml made all the difference in August as the average price to GPs fell by 45 per cent. Offers below £3 were available from Chemilines, OTC Direct, Ethigen and Beta.

### Dispensing doctors v pharmacists

Dispensing doctors continue to get better prices than pharmacists for the generics they buy. However, GPs were pipped at the post for parallel imports. Looking deeper into the data and specifically at the types of organisations making the price offers, manufacturers and buying groups tend to make equitable offers to both customer types, while wholesalers appear to give more recognition to the buying power of dispensing doctors.