

Atorvastatin prices continue downwards

The average trade price of 28-tablet packs of atorvastatin 20mg dropped by a fifth last month. It has now reached £1.83 (US\$2.83), although prices as low as £1.23 were on offer in July (see Figure 1). Already in category M of the Drug Tariff of reimbursement prices, the product is worth £6.16 to pharmacists when they dispense it. In terms of dispensing margin, this represents an average profit of over 70%.

When Lipitor's patent expired on 6 May, the 20mg strength had a trade price of £24.64. In two months, the price has fallen by 93% on average, and by 95% for those independent pharmacists and dispensing doctors who accessed the lowest price offer. Other strengths of atorvastatin were also among the biggest fallers last month (see Figure 2). Such rapid price falls make the 75% discount represented by the 20mg Drug Tariff price appear too conservative. However,

this seems likely to fall in the next quarter to nearer that required to meet the £350 million annual savings estimate of the British Generic Manufacturers Association (BGMA). This was based on an 85% discount to the health service (*Generics bulletin* 18 May 2012, page 21).

Meanwhile, 28-tablet packs of fosinopril 10mg were given the 'no cheaper stock obtainable' (NCSO) concession in July by the Department of Health, indicating product shortages, as a 184% average price rise would confirm. The concession allowed pharmacists to dispense and be reimbursed for a more expensive alternative. Methotrexate 2.5mg tablets were also granted NCSO status, while 28-tablet packs of tolbutamide 500mg were given a price concession of £22.50.

Fosinopril 20mg led the biggest risers table, alongside a relatively new product, pramipexole 350µg in 100-tablet packs (see Figure 3). **G**

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Atorvastatin tabs 40mg 28	£1.23	-17	£1.87	-22
Levetiracetam tabs 250mg 60	£1.99	-33	£4.14	-19
Repaglinide tabs 1mg 30	£0.80	-10	£1.23	-19
Valaciclovir tabs 500mg 42	£8.34	-1	£19.90	-18
Atorvastatin tabs 10mg 28	£0.65	-17	£0.99	-18
Bendroflumethiazide tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.23	-8	£0.37	-18

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Fosinopril tabs 20mg 28	£1.97	+6	£6.56	+158
Famotidine tabs 40mg 28	£1.99	+1	£8.12	+51
Captopril tabs 12.5mg 56	£0.25	±0	£0.60	+48
Fluvoxamine tabs 50mg 60	£3.85	+1	£7.58	+40
Pramipexole tabs 350µg 100	£5.85	-2	£27.87	+38
Tizanidine tabs 4mg 120	£2.85	+1	£5.82	+32

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-30 June 2012 and 1-24 July 2012 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 31 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-30 June

2012 and 1-24 July 2012 in lowest and average UK trade prices of about 748 commonly-dispensed generics. The basket specifically excludes the 'fast movers' shown below, but includes other presentations of the same products. Each average price was calculated from at least 17 data points (Source – WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Alendronate tabs 70mg 4	£0.17	±0	£0.24	-1
Alfuzosin tabs 2.5mg 60	£4.85	±0	£6.10	-3
Anastrozole tabs 1mg 28	£0.58	+16	£1.24	+7
Atorvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£1.23	-17	£1.83	-20
Bicalutamide tabs 50mg 28	£1.50	+1	£2.40	+8
Clarithromycin tabs 500mg 14	£1.95	+1	£2.62	+1
Clopidogrel tabs 75mg 28	£1.05	-3	£1.23	-3
Donepezil tabs 10mg 28	£0.99	±0	£1.58	-14
Dorzolamide eye drops 2% 5ml	£1.65	+6	£2.41	+6
Esomeprazole tabs 40mg 28	£7.95	±0	£10.53	-1
Exemestane tabs 25mg 30	£6.49	-7	£8.07	-6
Finasteride tabs 5mg 28	£0.69	-8	£1.02	+3
Fosinopril tabs 10mg 28	£1.43	+6	£8.36	+184
Glimepiride tabs 4mg 30	£0.44	-2	£0.73	-3
Lamotrigine tabs 100mg 56	£1.65	±0	£2.29	-4
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£0.96	-2	£1.09	-5
Latanoprost eye drops .005% 2.5ml	£1.59	±0	£2.33	-6
Lercanidipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.81	+3	£1.11	-6
Letrozole tabs 2.5mg 14	£1.35	-9	£1.87	-13
Levetiracetam tabs 500mg 60	£3.99	-3	£6.79	-14
Losartan tabs 100mg 28	£0.99	-7	£1.27	-5
Mirtazapine orodisp. tabs 45mg 30	£1.54	+6	£2.07	-1
Moxonidine tabs 200µg 28	£1.71	+1	£2.53	±0
Mycophenolate tabs 500mg 50	£5.75	+6	£8.44	-2
Nebivolol tabs 5mg 28	£0.72	-9	£1.32	-7

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Olanzapine tabs 5mg 28	£0.75	±0	£1.26	-8
Perindopril tabs 4mg 30	£0.87	+1	£1.12	-3
Pioglitazone tabs 15mg 28	£3.22	-8	£5.09	-15
Pramipexole tabs 700µg 30	£0.99	±0	£4.63	-11
Pravastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.59	+7	£0.93	+4
Quetiapine tabs 25mg 60	£0.99	±0	£2.19	-8
Risedronate sodium tabs 35mg 4	£0.30	-32	£0.61	-6
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.71	-1	£1.17	±0
Sertraline tabs 50mg 28	£0.32	-3	£0.54	+2
Sumatriptan tabs 100mg 6	£0.99	+10	£1.42	+2
Terbinafine cream 1% 15g	£0.95	+1	£1.34	-5
Topiramate tabs 25mg 60	£0.82	-2	£1.38	-2
Trandolapril caps 2mg 28	£1.25	+4	£1.73	-1
Valsartan caps 80mg 28	£1.50	-6	£2.16	-2
Zolmitriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£0.59	±0	£1.96	-12

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