

Concerted cuts do little to lowest prices

Average trade prices for four 'fast movers' all dropped by more than a fifth between September and October, according to the latest UK price information from WaveData. These products had little or nothing in common medicinally, but none of the average price falls were associated with similar cuts in their lowest prices.

As Figure 1 shows, metformin 500mg recorded the biggest average price fall of 24% to £0.72 (US\$1.16), but ciprofloxacin 500mg, glimepiride 4mg, and sumatriptan 50mg were not far behind.

Several players in each of the four markets for these products must have cut their prices as the lowest recorded for each changed little. Neither had the reimbursement prices for the products – all members of category M of the Drug Tariff – changed in the latest period.

In contrast, the lowest prices for amlodipine 10mg, fosinopril

20mg, risperidone 2mg and sertraline 100mg all rose sharply in October. However, such were the numbers of players in each market that there was little effect on average prices. Only pravastatin 20mg experienced a lowest-price change which matched that of its average price, as all of the market players reacted similarly.

Meanwhile, the lowest-price change of enalapril 20mg in Figure 1 reflects a price adjustment by WaveData. The £0.15 recorded in September (**Generics bulletin**, 15 October 2010, page 19) was for a short-dated product and a truer representation would have been £0.27. However, as Figure 2 shows, the average price of enalapril 5mg took a tumble last month, even if it was only partially reflected in its lowest price. Meanwhile, the fastest-rising prices in October were for 30-tablet packs of tamoxifen 20mg (see Figure 3). G

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Atenolol tabs 50mg 28	£0.13	+8	£0.16	-23
Bendroflumethiazide tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.23	-26	£0.38	-22
Enalapril tabs 5mg 28	£0.20	-9	£0.29	-19
Atenolol tabs 25mg 28	£0.09	±0	£0.13	-16
Captopril tabs 12.5mg 56	£0.20	-20	£0.44	-16
Famotidine tabs 20mg 28	£0.94	-12	£1.84	-15

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-30 September 2010 and 1-31 October 2010 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 12 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-30

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Tamoxifen tabs 20mg 30	£1.48	+35	£2.98	+25
Gabapentin caps 100mg 100	£1.80	±0	£5.57	+18
Oxytetracycline tabs 250mg 28	£0.32	+10	£0.46	+18
Diclofenac tabs 25mg 84	£0.34	±0	£0.58	+13
Warfarin tabs 1mg 28	£0.14	±0	£0.22	+11
Amoxicillin 125mg/5ml 100ml	£0.35	±0	£0.69	+11

September 2010 and 1-31 October 2010 in lowest and average UK trade prices of about 120 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 12 data points (Source – WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Alendronate tabs 70mg 4	£0.23	±0	£0.41	-3
Amlodipine tabs 5mg 28	£0.20	±0	£0.30	-12
Amlodipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.28	+17	£0.39	-7
Carvedilol tabs 6.25mg 28	£0.38	±0	£0.49	-2
Carvedilol tabs 12.5mg 28	£0.46	±0	£0.63	-6
Ciprofloxacin tabs 500mg 10	£0.27	-4	£0.45	-23
Citalopram tabs 10mg 28	£0.29	-6	£0.64	+7
Citalopram tabs 20mg 28	£0.53	-7	£1.29	+11
Citalopram tabs 40mg 28	£0.59	-2	£0.87	-7
Clarithromycin tabs 250mg 14	£1.07	-3	£1.48	-1
Enalapril tabs 20mg 28	£0.29	+7	£0.44	+19
Fosinopril tabs 20mg 28	£1.45	+22	£1.93	+1
Glimepiride tabs 4mg 30	£0.61	+5	£0.97	-21
Lamotrigine tabs 50mg 56	£1.50	+5	£2.15	-10
Lamotrigine tabs 100mg 56	£2.27	+4	£3.61	-4
Lansoprazole caps 15mg 28	£0.44	±0	£0.57	-9
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£1.03	±0	£1.20	-15
Lisinopril tabs 5mg 28	£0.18	±0	£0.26	-7
Lisinopril tabs 10mg 28	£0.19	±0	£0.31	-8
Lisinopril tabs 20mg 28	£0.34	±0	£0.47	-10
Metformin tabs 500mg 84	£0.51	+2	£0.72	-24
Mirtazapine tabs 30mg 28	£0.86	±0	£1.24	-8
Omeprazole caps 10mg 28	£0.74	+3	£0.93	-8
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	£0.75	+1	£0.95	±0
Ondansetron tabs 4mg 30	£2.99	+20	£4.92	-9

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Paroxetine tabs 20mg 30	£0.94	+22	£1.31	-5
Pravastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.93	-15	£1.30	-13
Pravastatin tabs 40mg 28	£1.39	-3	£1.80	-9
Ramipril caps 2.5mg 28	£0.33	-15	£0.51	-5
Ramipril caps 5mg 28	£0.46	+7	£0.61	±0
Ramipril caps 10mg 28	£0.57	+6	£0.71	-3
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.86	+25	£1.52	-9
Sertraline tabs 50mg 28	£0.44	±0	£0.95	-3
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£0.70	+19	£1.12	-6
Simvastatin tabs 10mg 28	£0.15	±0	£0.21	-5
Simvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.22	-8	£0.28	-7
Simvastatin tabs 40mg 28	£0.39	-7	£0.48	-6
Sumatriptan tabs 50mg 6	£0.71	-1	£0.93	-20
Tamsulosin caps 400µg 30	£0.79	±0	£1.06	-14
Terbinafine tabs 250mg 14	£1.12	+3	£1.36	-7

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