

# Duloxetine disappoints dispensers in July

Independent pharmacists who in June latched onto £0.99 (US\$1.32) offers for 28-capsule packs of duloxetine 30mg were disappointed in July to find that Forte Direct had discontinued the promotion. The 40% July increase when the lowest June offer was withdrawn, however, had little effect on the product's average price, which fell slightly to £2.90 in July (see Figure 1).

In the event, pharmacists were doubly-disadvantaged as the new Drug Tariff of pharmacy reimbursement prices for the July-September quarter slashed the value of dispensing duloxetine 30mg from £8.47 in June to just £4.81 in July. A potential dispensing margin of 88% in June thus became just 71% in July. Pharmacists who paid the average price saw their margins retreat from 65% to 40%.

Even double-digit falls in the prices of 100-tablet packs of nortriptyline were wiped out by the July changes to the Drug Tariff, which saw the reimbursement price fall by more than 16% to £47.56.

The best deal on the product was £37.95 in June (*Generics bulletin*, 22 July 2016, page 10), giving a margin of 33%. But the margin was only lifted to 35% in July, despite an 18% fall in the lowest price of nortriptyline 10mg to £30.99. The effect of the Tariff changes was more marked on average nortriptyline prices, with a 14% margin in June becoming a 9% margin in July, despite a 12% monthly fall in the product's average price.

Three strengths of ropinirole were among the fastest-rising prices in Figure 2, as were two strengths of aspirin. Prices for pioglitazone falling from highs earlier this year were responsible for three strengths of the diabetes treatment among the fastest price-fallers in Figure 3, along with trimethoprim 100mg.

Atorvastatin 20mg had more price offers than usual in July, pushing it up the ratings to second place and breaking the leadership hold of the proton-pump inhibitors omeprazole and lansoprazole (see Figure 4). **G**

RECENT LAUNCHES				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Aripiprazole tabs 10mg 28	£0.89	-1	£1.74	-6
Benzylamine 0.15% 300ml	£4.85	+2	£5.59	+1
Carbimazole tabs 5mg 100	£59.80	-8	£69.95	-6
Celecoxib caps 200mg 30	£0.77	-3	£1.42	-5
Cilostazol tabs 100mg 56	£1.89	±0	£3.28	-10
Cyclizine tabs 50mg 100	£5.75	-1	£7.98	+2
Desogestrel tabs 75µg 84	£1.18	±0	£2.10	+19
Duloxetine caps 30mg 28	£1.39	+40	£2.90	-1
Entacapone tabs 200mg 30	£3.75	-4	£5.49	-2
Eplerenone tabs 25mg 28	£3.45	-3	£5.55	-10
Escitalopram tabs 10mg 28	£0.24	+20	£0.74	-4
Fusidic acid cream 2% 15g	£1.22	±0	£1.63	+3
Memantine tabs 10mg 28	£0.56	±0	£0.95	+6
Mometasone furoate 0.1% 30g	£1.21	-3	£1.93	-4
Montelukast tabs 10mg 28	£1.02	-27	£1.65	-8
Nortriptyline tabs 10mg 100	£30.99	-18	£43.13	-12
Oxcarbazepine tabs 300mg 50	£4.90	±0	£6.18	±0
Rabeprazole tabs 10mg 28	£0.85	+8	£1.25	+2
Raloxifene tabs 60mg 28	£2.65	±0	£3.64	±0
Riluzole tabs 50mg 56	£11.25	±0	£16.91	-2
Rizatriptan tabs 10mg 3	£0.76	-5	£1.59	+10
Sevelamer tabs 800mg 180	£48.40	-12	£71.25	-11
Sildenafil tabs 100mg 4	£0.23	-4	£0.57	+16
Telmisartan tabs 80mg 28	£0.74	±0	£1.42	+4
Tolterodine tabs 2mg 56	£1.32	+2	£1.75	-4

Figure 1 (above): Comparison between the periods 1-30 June 2016 and 1-31 July 2016 of UK trade prices of the most recently-launched generics listed in category M of the Drug Tariff of pharmacy-reimbursement prices. Averages calculated from at least 25 data points. Figure 2 (top right) and Figure 3 (centre right): Biggest average trade-price changes between 1-30 June 2016 and 1-31 July 2016. Averages calculated from at least 10 data points. Figure 4 (bottom right): Ranking of fastest-moving products subject to the most price offers made to independent UK pharmacists (one strength per ingredient; offers recorded by 31 July). Data for Figures 2, 3 and 4 from a basket of about 750 commonly-dispensed generics. Recently-launched products in Figure 1 excluded from Figures 2 and 3 (Source – WaveData).

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Aspirin tabs 300mg 32	£0.17	-6	£1.66	+493
Ropinirole tabs 2mg 28	£1.05	-5	£10.74	+434
Ropinirole tabs 0.25mg 12	£0.65	+16	£7.25	+200
Naratriptan tabs 2.5mg 12	£2.49	+3	£9.40	+188
Ropinirole tabs 0.5mg 28	£1.09	+4	£14.63	+172
Aspirin tabs 75mg 1,000	£1.79	-1	£10.01	+157

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Pioglitazone tabs 45mg 28	£2.49	-28	£9.12	-38
Pioglitazone tabs 15mg 28	£1.50	-39	£5.95	-35
Chlordiazepoxide caps 5mg 100	£1.93	-8	£3.39	-32
Pioglitazone tabs 30mg 28	£2.25	-8	£6.66	-32
Trimethoprim tabs 100mg 28	£0.29	-15	£0.51	-32
Pramipexole tabs 350µg 100	£0.50	±0	£4.01	-29

FAST MOVERS			
Product/Strength/Pack size	Price offers as at 31 July 2016		
	May	June	July
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	129	133	122
Atorvastatin tabs 20mg 28	106	102	112
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	109	104	103
Sertraline tabs 50mg 28	93	102	94
Fluoxetine caps 20mg 30	86	87	93
Co-codamol tabs 8mg/500mg 100	83	81	91
Ramipril caps 2.5mg 28	74	71	90
Gabapentin caps 300mg 100	94	84	90
Tramadol caps 50mg 100	85	101	89
Clopidogrel tabs 75mg 28	91	91	89

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