

Good deals disappear in a steady market

Good deals on some fast-moving products were more difficult for pharmacists and dispensing doctors to find last month as special price offers were withdrawn and lowest prices rose quite sharply. At the same time, however, average prices were static or falling, indicating that only individual suppliers were increasing their prices, and that generally there were no supply issues.

Lansoprazole was a case in point. Packs containing 28 capsules of lansoprazole 30mg were 20% cheaper on average at £4.15 (US\$7.80), but bargain hunters were paying 20% more in September than they had been in August to get the lowest price (see Figure 1).

Similarly, the rises in pravastatin's average prices in recent months

came to an abrupt halt in September. Bargains, however, were non-existent as the lowest prices jumped by at least 15%. The lowest market price for pravastatin 10mg exceeded £0.03 per tablet for the first time in 18 months (**Generics bulletin**, 8 April 2005, page 16).

Ranitidine 300mg tablets in 30-tablet packs displayed the largest price fall on average in September outside the fast-movers. The decline of 22% was not matched by the product's lowest price, however, which only fell away by 5% (see Figure 2).

An unusual feature of the biggest risers in Figure 3 was that none of the lowest offers moved at all during the month, but a number of suppliers increased their prices substantially.

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Ranitidine tabs 300mg 30	£0.42	-5	£0.79	-22
Timolol eye drops 0.25% 5ml	£0.44	+2	£0.75	-20
Timolol eye drops 0.5% 5ml	£0.43	±0	£0.76	-18
Enalapril tabs 5mg 28	£0.18	-10	£0.36	-18
Amoxicillin susp. 125mg/5ml 100ml	£0.26	+4	£0.39	-17
Amoxicillin susp. 250mg/5ml 100ml	£0.34	-8	£0.49	-16

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Oxytetracycline tabs 250mg 28	£0.29	±0	£0.70	+60
Levothyroxine tabs 50µg 28	£0.13	±0	£0.32	+53
Levothyroxine tabs 100µg 28	£0.13	±0	£0.32	+53
Co-amoxiclav tabs 250/125mg 21	£1.59	±0	£2.80	+13
Nitrazepam tabs 5mg 28	£0.16	±0	£0.29	+13
Co-proxamol tabs 32.5/325mg 100	£0.54	±0	£1.23	+12

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-31 August and 1-26 September 2006 of the lowest and average UK market prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 17 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-31

August and 1-26 September 2006 in lowest and average UK market 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	£2.75	-18	£6.39	-19
Amlodipine tabs 5mg 28	£0.49	±0	£0.70	-23
Amlodipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.72	+6	£0.99	-27
Carvedilol tabs 3.125mg 28	£0.48	-4	£1.03	-7
Carvedilol tabs 6.25mg 28	£0.70	-7	£1.27	-8
Carvedilol tabs 12.5mg 28	£0.80	-6	£1.31	-7
Carvedilol tabs 25mg 28	£0.75	-13	£1.67	-4
Ciprofloxacin tabs 250mg 10	£0.25	±0	£0.45	-4
Ciprofloxacin tabs 500mg 10	£0.33	+18	£0.58	-4
Ciprofloxacin tabs 750mg 10	£0.69	±0	£1.21	-6
Citalopram tabs 10mg 28	£0.69	+3	£1.50	+4
Citalopram tabs 20mg 28	£1.19	+3	£2.14	+6
Citalopram tabs 40mg 28	£0.99	+2	£2.27	+1
Clarithromycin tabs 250mg 14	£1.57	+76	£2.39	-4
Clarithromycin tabs 500mg 14	£3.36	-4	£4.78	-6
Lamotrigine tabs 25mg 56	£1.12	-10	£2.98	-7
Lamotrigine tabs 50mg 56	£1.95	-2	£4.17	-14
Lamotrigine tabs 100mg 56	£2.95	-8	£7.13	-15
Lamotrigine tabs 200mg 56	£5.49	-18	£14.72	-18
Lansoprazole caps 15mg 28	£1.79	+26	£2.69	-19

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£2.99	+20	£4.15	-20
Lisinopril tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.13	±0	£0.24	-3
Lisinopril tabs 5mg 28	£0.15	±0	£0.29	-4
Lisinopril tabs 10mg 28	£0.20	-5	£0.44	-8
Lisinopril tabs 20mg 28	£0.39	-7	£0.73	-6
Omeprazole caps 10mg 28	£0.83	-6	£1.39	-12
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	£0.87	-8	£1.89	-26
Paroxetine tabs 20mg 30	£2.29	-4	£3.29	-8
Pravastatin tabs 10mg 28	£0.85	+21	£1.70	+24
Pravastatin tabs 20mg 28	£1.09	+28	£2.57	+22
Pravastatin tabs 40mg 28	£2.20	+15	£3.65	+4
Ramipril caps 1.25mg 28	£0.31	+3	£0.46	-9
Ramipril caps 2.5mg 28	£0.39	-3	£0.60	-3
Ramipril caps 5mg 28	£0.50	±0	£0.74	-2
Ramipril caps 10mg 28	£0.62	-6	£0.93	-4
Sertraline tabs 50mg 28	£0.72	-15	£1.51	-13
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£1.37	-1	£2.55	-20
Simvastatin tabs 10mg 28	£0.20	-5	£0.36	-26
Simvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.35	+21	£0.57	-18
Simvastatin tabs 40mg 28	£0.93	-3	£1.35	-15

PRICE WATCH UK highlights generics price changes in the UK market and appears exclusively in every issue of **Generics bulletin**, courtesy of the Pharma TouchStone service of WaveData.

WaveData collects and collates pricing information from a number of European countries. In the UK, pricing information about generics, brands and parallel imports is gathered from offers made to independent retail pharmacists and dispensing doctors by wholesalers, suppliers and product manufacturers.

WaveData collates this data and publishes the results as its Pharma TouchStone service. This is designed to give customers of the service fast, accurate, real-time access to current generic prices.

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