

Higher prices mean market shortages

Eight different products were the subject of price concessions by the Department of Health in March, indicating a wide variety of shortages in the primary-care sector. Three of them – indapamide 2.5mg tablets, isosorbide mononitrate 40mg tablets and sertraline 100mg tablets – were given ‘no cheaper stock obtainable’ (NCSO) status, allowing pharmacists to dispense, and be reimbursed for, a more expensive alternative. This was unsurprising, given the products’ huge monthly average price rises, as shown in Figure 3.

Meanwhile, temazepam 10mg and 20mg tablets were granted price concessions in an update halfway through the month, permitting pharmacists to ignore the Drug Tariff of reimbursement prices and apply dispensing prices of £24 (US\$36) and £21 respectively. These prices compared with £4.23 and £2.71 in the Drug Tariff.

The newcomers joined hydralazine 50mg tablets, nabumetone 500mg tablets, nifedipine 5mg and 10mg capsules, sertraline 50mg tablets and trazodone 100mg capsules and 150mg tablets which had already been granted handsome price concessions.

Only sertraline 50mg tablets from this list featured among the ‘biggest risers’ this month, although trazadone appeared last month (*Generics bulletin*, 8 March 2013, page 25).

Elsewhere in March, average prices were relatively stable, as Figure 1 shows. One of the few double-digit price changes was the 10% drop in the lowest-recorded trade price of 28-tablet packs of atorvastatin 20mg to just £0.64, or barely more than £0.02 per tablet. Other, more marked, price falls in Figure 2 were headed by 28-tablet packs of olanzapine 5mg orodispersible tablets with a 55% average price decline. **G**

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Olanzapine oro tabs 5mg 28	£0.75	+21	£2.09	-55
Pramipexole tabs 350µg 30	£1.29	±0	£4.71	-51
Olanzapine oro tabs 20mg 28	£2.45	+86	£7.04	-42
Ondansetron tabs 4mg 30	£1.99	+2	£3.82	-23
Glycerin suppositories 4g 12	£0.44	-2	£0.73	-23
Candesartan tabs 4mg 28	£0.75	-29	£2.00	-22

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Indapamide tabs 2.5mg 56	£0.76	±0	£16.38	+866
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£0.99	+60	£11.38	+600
Sertraline tabs 50mg 28	£0.64	+52	£5.90	+411
Isosorbide tabs 40mg 56	£1.73	+12	£10.47	+158
Isosorbide tabs 10mg 56	£1.10	+3	£19.84	+142
Indapamide tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.99	+43	£14.49	+140

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-28 February 2013 and 1-26 March 2013 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 33 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-28

February 2013 and 1-26 March 2013 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 (%)
Alfuzosin tabs 2.5mg 60	£4.25	+2	£5.32	-2
Anastrozole tabs 1mg 28	£0.91	+8	£1.56	+2
Atorvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.64	-10	£0.93	-7
Bicalutamide tabs 50mg 28	£1.24	-9	£2.13	±0
Buprenorphine tabs 2mg 7	£0.80	-56	£2.97	-6
Candesartan tabs 8mg 28	£1.44	-11	£1.93	-7
Clopidogrel tabs 75mg 28	£0.92	-4	£1.15	±0
Desloratadine tabs 5mg 30	£0.99	-1	£2.80	-4
Donepezil tabs 10mg 28	£0.62	±0	£2.75	-17
Dorzolamide eye drops 2% 5ml	£1.39	+11	£1.98	+1
Esomeprazole tabs 40mg 28	£5.25	-4	£7.21	-4
Exemestane tabs 25mg 30	£3.57	±0	£6.75	-7
Finasteride tabs 5mg 28	£0.62	+7	£0.95	-1
Glimepiride tabs 4mg 30	£0.44	±0	£0.74	+1
Irbesartan tabs 75mg 28	£0.88	+4	£1.41	-6
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£0.82	-2	£0.95	-2
Latanoprost eye drops .005% 2.5ml	£0.97	-11	£1.73	-4
Lercanidipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.64	+5	£1.07	-1
Letrozole tabs 2.5mg 14	£0.90	-2	£1.45	-2
Levetiracetam tabs 500mg 60	£1.62	-12	£3.32	-10
Losartan tabs 100mg 28	£0.53	-10	£0.87	-3
Mirtazapine orodisp. tabs 45mg 30	£1.27	-2	£1.82	-7
Mycophenolate tabs 500mg 50	£5.50	+26	£6.95	+1
Naratriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£1.01	-6	£2.05	-3
Nebivolol tabs 5mg 28	£0.89	-3	£1.38	-3

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Olanzapine tabs 5mg 28	£0.57	+16	£0.93	-5
Perindopril tabs 4mg 30	£0.73	-4	£1.02	-9
Pioglitazone tabs 15mg 28	£0.75	±0	£1.69	-6
Pramipexole tabs 700µg 30	£1.54	+6	£3.09	+3
Quetiapine tabs 25mg 60	£0.84	-2	£1.46	±0
Risedronate tabs 35mg 4	£0.33	±0	£0.59	±0
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.69	±0	£1.22	+1
Sumatriptan tabs 100mg 6	£0.89	-2	£1.39	-3
Terbinafine cream 1% 15g	£1.05	+12	£1.52	+6
Tolterodine tabs 2mg 56	£2.49	-4	£4.08	-4
Topiramate tabs 25mg 60	£0.75	-1	£1.51	-7
Trandolapril caps 2mg 28	£0.85	-14	£1.51	+1
Valsartan caps 80mg 28	£0.82	-4	£1.79	±0
Venlafaxine tabs 75mg 56	£1.64	±0	£2.29	+5
Zolmitriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£0.47	-4	£1.66	+1

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