

Steep price rises were registered in July

Many prices were on the rise in July, some by large margins. Citalopram and sertraline were two of the the biggest risers, with both their lowest and average prices moving up sharply. Such price movements indicate that not only were the best offers being withdrawn, but several manufacturers were putting up their prices.

Rises of almost a half in prices for the two lowest strengths of citalopram – and by nearly a quarter for the 40mg strength (see Figure 1) – cut pharmacists' dispensing margins dramatically compared with a month earlier. The average dispensing margin for 28-tablet packs of citalopram 20mg went from 64% in June to just under 50% in July, based on a July purchase price of £0.75 (US\$1.20) and a 5% higher Drug Tariff reimbursement price of £1.46. Similarly, the average citalopram 10mg margin dropped from 67% to 54% in a month.

Independent pharmacists and dispensing doctors were making a 52% average dispensing margin on 28-tablet sertraline 50mg packs in June, but this came down to a 37% margin in July after a 39% rise in the product's average price to £0.96 and a 5% increase in the Drug Tariff reimbursement price to £1.52.

Ondansetron was one of the few products to buck the trend, although its average price falls of almost a fifth were not replicated in the products' lowest prices. However, these were already less than a third of their average equivalents (see Figures 1 and 2).

Bendroflumethiazide 2.5mg tablets in 28-count packs were over three-times more expensive in July than they had been in June, admittedly from a low base (see Figure 3). Meanwhile, the 5mg strength had a more modest 41% added to its average price. G

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Ondansetron tabs 8mg 10	£2.94	±0	£7.02	-16
Pergolide tabs 50µg 100	£10.15	-7	£13.13	-16
Ciprofloxacin tabs 100mg 6	£0.67	±0	£1.00	-15
Oxytetracycline tabs 250mg 28	£0.34	+6	£0.57	-15
Penicillamine tabs 250mg 56	£15.62	-2	£18.23	-14
Terazosin tabs 5mg 28	£1.21	±0	£2.06	-14

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Bendroflumethiazide tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.14	+75	£0.65	+265
Gabapentin caps 300mg 100	£4.24	+42	£13.00	+121
Co-tenidone tabs 50/12.5mg 28	£0.90	+100	£1.46	+69
Co-tenidone tabs 100/25mg 28	£0.99	+68	£1.56	+59
Levothyroxine tabs 100µg 28	£0.29	±0	£0.63	+59
Levothyroxine tabs 50µg 28	£0.31	+7	£0.62	+53

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-30 June 2010 and 1-28 July 2010 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 24 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-30 June 2010 and 1-

28 July 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 13 data points (Source – WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Alendronate tabs 70mg 4	£0.19	±0	£0.28	+8
Amlodipine tabs 5mg 28	£0.24	+4	£0.38	±0
Amlodipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.32	-3	£0.48	-4
Carvedilol tabs 6.25mg 28	£0.40	+5	£0.52	-6
Carvedilol tabs 12.5mg 28	£0.49	+7	£0.68	+3
Ciprofloxacin tabs 500mg 10	£0.27	±0	£0.58	+21
Citalopram tabs 10mg 28	£0.30	+25	£0.60	+47
Citalopram tabs 20mg 28	£0.41	+14	£0.75	+49
Citalopram tabs 40mg 28	£0.54	+13	£0.88	+24
Clarithromycin tabs 250mg 14	£1.14	-3	£1.71	+3
Enalapril tabs 20mg 28	£0.33	±0	£0.49	+1
Fosinopril tabs 20mg 28	£1.46	-2	£1.95	-11
Glimepiride tabs 4mg 30	£0.66	+10	£1.28	+17
Lamotrigine tabs 50mg 56	£1.45	-5	£2.42	-6
Lamotrigine tabs 100mg 56	£2.47	-6	£3.58	-16
Lansoprazole caps 15mg 28	£0.49	±0	£0.70	+5
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£1.12	-2	£1.38	-2
Lisinopril tabs 5mg 28	£0.16	±0	£0.30	+28
Lisinopril tabs 10mg 28	£0.22	+5	£0.33	+16
Lisinopril tabs 20mg 28	£0.37	+3	£0.52	+11
Metformin tabs 500mg 84	£0.37	-8	£0.79	+19
Mirtazapine tabs 30mg 28	£1.02	-3	£1.57	+8
Omeprazole caps 10mg 28	£0.88	-1	£1.22	+3
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	£0.85	-3	£1.13	-16
Ondansetron tabs 4mg 30	£2.50	±0	£7.93	-19

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Paroxetine tabs 20mg 30	£0.78	+5	£1.38	+1
Pravastatin tabs 20mg 28	£1.15	-2	£1.58	+2
Pravastatin tabs 40mg 28	£1.59	-4	£2.11	-2
Ramipril caps 2.5mg 28	£0.38	+23	£0.57	+36
Ramipril caps 5mg 28	£0.37	+6	£0.65	+17
Ramipril caps 10mg 28	£0.59	+13	£0.76	+14
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.85	-4	£1.87	+9
Sertraline tabs 50mg 28	£0.42	+24	£0.96	+39
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£0.56	+17	£1.01	+24
Simvastatin tabs 10mg 28	£0.16	-6	£0.23	+3
Simvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.24	±0	£0.31	+4
Simvastatin tabs 40mg 28	£0.44	+2	£0.55	+6
Sumatriptan tabs 50mg 6	£0.74	+3	£1.18	+13
Tamsulosin caps 400µg 30	£0.88	±0	£1.65	+8
Terbinafine tabs 250mg 14	£1.07	-12	£1.42	-13

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E-mail cjoynson@wavedata.co.uk.

