

Dispensing practices win generic price battle while war continues

By Wavedata

Average generic purchase prices are up by one-fifth compared to a year ago, although prices to dispensing practices remain more competitive than those offered to pharmacies, Wavedata's price report for May concludes.

Compared to a year ago, average generic purchase prices have risen by £2 to £12, although dispensing practices typically encounter prices with a £0.60p advantage over pharmacies.

Looking specifically at the purchase prices on offer during May, no products stood out strongly as a price faller or riser, with the only exceptions being valsartan capsules, with two packs amongst the fallers and one pack of tablets among the risers. Elsewhere among the fallers are two packs of both omeprazole capsules and oxcarbazepine tablets, and among the risers: cefalexin capsules and ranitidine effervescent tablets.

Quetiapine fell into both camps with quetiapine tables 150mg x60 a faller and quetiapine MR tablets 150mg x60 a riser.

Fallers

In May the average price of levocetirizine tabs 5mg x30 fell by 50% as Teva reduced prices and dispensing doctors saw fewer Actavis offers. Pharmacists saw similar activity. Low prices below £0.80 were still available from Trident, Beta, Ethigen, Eclipse, Lexon and Sigma.

The prices for tizanidine tabs 4mg x120 fell on average by 49% in May as Teva again reduced prices. Low prices below £5.00 were available to pharmacists and dispensing doctors from Edinpharm, Beta, Trident, Numark, Sigma, Teva, Sangers (NI), AAH, Waymade, Chemilines, Lexon, Mawdsleys and Phoenix.

Omeprazole caps 40mg x28 also fell by an average of 49% in May as again Teva reduced prices. Pharmacists saw a similar picture. The best prices below £1.00 were available from Elite, Eclipse, Edinpharm, Ethigen, Trident, Lexon, Sigma, Numark and Waymade.

Risers

During May metronidazole tabs 200mg x21 rose on average by 356% as Actavis increased prices. Prices below £0.40 were available to both sorts of account from Waymade, Beta, Edinpharm, OTC Direct, Ethigen, Lexon, Eclipse, Sigma and Numark.

Ranitidine eff. tabs 150mg x60 rose by 88% on average in May as some of the low prices available to pharmacists and dispensing doctors disappeared from the market. Deals below £20.00 were still available from Lexon and Waymade.

The picture for ranitidine eff. tabs 300mg x30 was similar to that of the 150mg x60 pack. The best deals of below £20.00 were available from Ethigen, Lexon and Alliance. Teva's prices missed the £20.00 mark by only the narrowest of margins.

Parallel Imports

Written down, the lines representing the average parallel import buying prices for dispensing doctors and for pharmacists almost look like the tracks of two ballroom dancers in step with each other. Suppliers appear to be simply charging dispensing surgeries about £1.20 more than they charge retail pharmacists. This may be due to lower take up of PI medicines or to higher fuel costs, but it does look like a long term trend.

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