

# Suppliers accused of manipulating market

Generics suppliers have been accused of “market manipulation” by the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC), which represents community pharmacists in their dealings with the government’s Department of Health (DoH).

Noting the increasing number of high-volume products that have been affected, the PSNC said: “Manipulation of the market is making the situation increasingly complicated and appears to be having a significant impact in some regions.”

The PSNC was commenting before the May 2013 price concessions were unveiled by the DoH, indicating what the department was prepared to reimburse pharmacists over and above the Drug Tariff for certain products in shortage. The list was long, with 16 presentations of the ingredients cyclophosphamide, hydralazine, indapamide, isosorbide,

nabumetone, naftidrofuryl, sertraline, temazepam and trazodone.

“PSNC is aware there is considerable stock available at or below the concessionary prices. It is vital that pharmacists continue to challenge prices that are significantly [higher],” the PSNC added. “We have received reports of some wholesalers deliberately inflating prices and informing contractors that ‘no cheaper stock obtainable’ (NCSO) will be granted [by the DoH].” NCSO status goes further than a price concession, allowing pharmacists to be reimbursed exactly what they paid for the products in short supply.

Average trade prices for two items on the DoH’s list – isosorbide and sertraline – fell sharply in May (see Figure 2). However, they may be replaced by olanzapine orodispersible tablets, judging by Figure 3. Plain olanzapine prices seem unaffected (see Figure 1).

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Pramipexole tabs 350µg 100	£3.60	±0	£14.27	-62
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£1.11	-72	£13.80	-46
Isosorbide tabs 10mg 56	£2.17	+32	£18.46	-34
Bendroflumethiazide tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.09	-10	£0.13	-31
Pramipexole tabs 180µg 100	£1.51	±0	£3.35	-31
Trandolapril caps 1mg 28	£0.89	-8	£1.37	-30

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Olanzapine oro tabs 5mg 28	£0.54	±0	£3.97	+76
Olanzapine oro tabs 20mg 28	£2.09	-13	£13.75	+74
Olanzapine oro tabs 15mg 28	£1.39	±0	£10.60	+73
Phenobarbital tabs 60mg 28	£0.33	+10	£0.84	+69
Olanzapine oro tabs 10mg 28	£0.75	±0	£6.80	+50
Lisinopril tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.16	+14	£0.49	+36

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-30 April 2013 and 1-24 May 2013 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 22 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-30 April

2013 and 1-24 May 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 20 data points (Source – WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Alfuzosin tabs 2.5mg 60	£3.99	-3	£5.08	-4
Anastrozole tabs 1mg 28	£0.60	±0	£1.54	+17
Atorvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.62	±0	£0.87	+3
Bicalutamide tabs 50mg 28	£1.20	-3	£2.32	+6
Buprenorphine tabs 2mg 7	£0.85	-11	£2.57	-5
Candesartan tabs 8mg 28	£1.14	-7	£1.56	-10
Clopidogrel tabs 75mg 28	£0.94	-1	£1.13	-1
Desloratadine tabs 5mg 30	£1.12	-24	£1.93	-19
Donepezil tabs 10mg 28	£0.60	±0	£2.89	+24
Dorzolamide eye drops 2% 5ml	£1.33	-5	£1.72	-10
Entacapone tabs 200mg 30	£6.75	-6	£8.05	-4
Esomeprazole tabs 40mg 28	£5.19	-1	£6.46	±0
Exemestane tabs 25mg 30	£3.55	±0	£5.38	+1
Finasteride tabs 5mg 28	£0.63	±0	£0.94	-3
Irbesartan tabs 75mg 28	£0.69	-5	£1.09	-17
Latanoprost eye drops .005% 2.5ml	£0.97	-8	£1.55	-18
Lercanidipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.63	-2	£1.00	+2
Letrozole tabs 2.5mg 14	£0.85	±0	£1.33	-1
Levetiracetam tabs 500mg 60	£1.15	-11	£2.77	-4
Losartan tabs 100mg 28	£0.52	±0	£0.83	+4
Mirtazapine orodisp. tabs 45mg 30	£1.27	-2	£1.86	+1
Mycophenolate tabs 500mg 50	£5.46	-1	£6.87	-2
Naratriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£0.79	-8	£1.65	-5
Nebivolol tabs 5mg 28	£0.87	-1	£1.28	-3
Olanzapine tabs 5mg 28	£0.40	-27	£0.83	-4

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Perindopril tabs 4mg 30	£0.64	-14	£0.97	+2
Pioglitazone tabs 15mg 28	£0.75	+16	£1.25	-8
Pramipexole tabs 700µg 30	£1.35	±0	£2.49	-7
Quetiapine tabs 25mg 60	£0.75	-11	£1.25	±0
Rabeprazole tabs 10mg 28	£2.28	-4	£2.79	-1
Riluzole tabs 50mg 56	£45.99	-4	£58.19	-5
Risedronate tabs 35mg 4	£0.43	+30	£0.67	+6
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.67	+2	£1.24	+1
Terbinafine cream 1% 15g	£1.29	+8	£1.70	+12
Tolterodine tabs 2mg 56	£2.29	-8	£3.24	-7
Topiramate tabs 25mg 60	£0.87	+9	£1.46	-2
Trandolapril caps 2mg 28	£0.73	±0	£1.34	+1
Valsartan caps 80mg 28	£0.85	±0	£1.55	-10
Venlafaxine tabs 75mg 56	£1.60	-2	£2.19	-3
Zolmitriptan tabs 2.5mg 6	£0.45	±0	£1.05	-13

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