



**April 2013**

Just 750 price changes to review this quarter (!) but once again, I think the overall effect is neutral.

## **Gastro-intestinal system (BNF Chapter 1)**

Starting at the beginning of the BNF, there is some news regarding the PPI rabeprazole which is that it has entered Category M with price reductions of over half but that was after it went up 30-45% on a change from Category C to A last month. Prices now are 10mg 3.54 and 20mg 5.52. Thus all plain PPIs are now Category M and prices for the rest are: esomeprazole 20mg 7.15 (-23%), 40mg 9.19 (-18%), lansoprazole 15mg capsules 1.28 (+8%), 30 mg capsules 1.78 (+3%), omeprazole 20mg capsules 1.35 (+3%), 40mg capsules 1.37 (+2%), 20mg tablets 4.77 (-32%), 40mg tablets 4.08 (-27%), pantoprazole 20mg tablets 1.23 (+8%) and 40mg tablets 1.61 (+1%). Ranitidine 150mg tablets are now 1.51 (-25%) but not such a large drop for 300mg which are down just 5% to 1.96. The 75mg/5ml oral solution is down a further 8% to 8.35. One other line catching my eye with a rather large increase is senna 7.5mg tablets [still category M] which are up 48% to 4.18 for 60.

## **Cardiovascular system (BNF Chapter 2)**

Bendroflumethiazide 2.5mg and 5mg tablets are up again, and by a larger percentage than last quarter: 2.5mg by 19% to 88p and 5mg by 18% to 84p. Furosemide 40mg also increases further, by 30% to 92p. Not much different from bumetanide 1mg tablets which are 1.10. Atenolol is up a further 16-17% so 50mg now 85p and 100mg now 90p. Bisoprolol 5mg tablets are up 6% to 1.15 but 10mg are down 2% to 1.21 and carvedilol is little changed: 12.5mg unchanged at 1.38 and 25mg up only a penny at 1.58.

Glyceryl trinitrate 500mcg tablets are down 10p to 2.20. Amlodipine is up again and by even more than last time, rising around 13% to 98p and 1.07 for 5mg and 10mg tablets respectively. Doxazosin 4mg tablets are up another 4% to 1.22. Starting the ACE inhibitors with enalapril, 10mg tablets are up 14% to 1.05 although 20mg have dropped 2% to 1.15 while lisinopril 10mg is up 11% to 99p and 20mg is up 8% to 1.10. Although perindopril 4mg is down 3p to 2.03 and 8mg is down 4p to 2.11, ramipril 5mg capsules are up 11% to 1.21 and 10mg capsules are up 8% to 1.30. In contrast, tablets have dropped slightly, narrowing the difference with capsules. The strange goes on with

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fosinopril continue: this time 10mg tablets have completely reversed what they did last time by more than doubling to 22.45, yet 20mg are up only 12% to 6.63 . As the significant news last quarter was about the entry into Category M of irbesartan, I shall start with that again and following the well-established pattern this drops more this quarter, so 75, 150 and 300mg tablets now 2.12 (-18%), 2.43 (-22%) and 3.47 (-14%). Apart from the 4mg tablets which have risen a further 10% to 1.36 (7 pack), higher strengths of candesartan are down e.g. 8mg tablets by 7% to 2.84, 16mg tablets by 13% to 3.44 and 32mg tablets by 6% to 4.39 . All of losartan is down too: 50mg by 6% to 1.41, 100mg by 9% to 1.67, 50/12.5 combination by 13% to 1.84 and

100/25 also by 13% to 2.63. A similar tale with valsartan: 80mg down by 12% to 2.32 and 160mg by 16% to 2.83 while the 160/12.5 combination is down 8% to 2.99. Antiplatelets and aspirin 75mg dispersible is up 19% to 82p but clopidogrel 75mg is down 2% to 1.88. Statins and atorvastatin continued to drift downwards on a *monthly* basis - until now - so this month's prices are actually a few pence dearer than last at 1.33, 1.71, 1.93 and 3.49 for 10, 20, 40 and 80mg tablets but this is still less than they were in January. Pravastatin 40mg is down 5% to 2.60 but simvastatin is all up by double figure percentages so 10mg now 87p (+18%), 20mg 95p (+16%), 40mg 1.18 (+12%) and 80mg 2.25 (+24%) .

### ***Respiratory system (BNF Chapter 3)***

Respiratory and the non-sedating antihistamines: cetirizine 10mg up 21% to 1.08 now making the price difference with loratadine 10mg just 2p as the latter has risen only 7% to 1.10. Desloratadine has continued to fall, being down 27% to 3.60. Salbutamol 2mg and 4mg tablets are now over £1.50, \*per tablet\*!

### ***Central nervous system (BNF Chapter 4)***

Central Nervous system and starting with antipsychotics in alphabetical order...olanzapine is all down so 10, 15 and 20mg are now 2.13 [-20%], 2.87 [-19%] and 3.75 [-22%]. Quetiapine is also down and the new prices for 25, 100, 200 and 300mg are 2.25 (-14%), 4.83 (-17%), 5.54 (-16%) and 7.65 (-27%). However, once again, plain forms of risperidone are mostly up so new prices for 2, 3 and 4mg are 1.62 (up just a penny), 1.92 (+8p) and 1.93 (+14p). The very large price differential with orodispersible versions continues.... Antidepressants and citalopram 20mg is up 9% to 96p and 40mg is up 6% to 1.11. Fluoxetine 20mg is up 14% to 96p and 60mg is down 14% to 40.81. Sertraline 50mg is up 30% to 1.38, making it more expensive than 100mg which has risen 7% to 1.30. However, although this is what's shown in the Tariff, actual prices in April will be £14 and £18 respectively!

<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/4000.aspx> Mirtazapine is little changed with the differences being just pennies: 30 and 45mg plain tablets now 1.63 (+4p) and 2.55 (-17p) while orodispersible equivalents are 1.90 (+7p) and 2.28 (-2p). A

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rather expensive tricyclic-type: trimipramine stabilised in the last quarter at between 13.00 and 17.50 for 28 packs of 10-50mg. Lamotrigine is down again so 100mg now 2.68 (-13%) and 200mg now 3.91 (-21%). Levetiracetam is again down significantly e.g. 500mg by 29% to 4.17 and 750mg by 42% to 6.61. Changes to topiramate prices are again variable e.g. 25mg capsules are down 20% to 17.37 but tablets are up 18% to 3.21; 50mg tablets and capsules have only changed slightly, maintaining the [approximately] 10 fold price difference; 100mg tablets are down slightly to 3.37 and 200mg tablets are barely changed at 4.61. And again gabapentin is mainly down so 300mg capsules fall 11% to 3.45, 400mg capsules fall 2% to 4.51, 600mg tablets are down 14% 11.20 and 800mg tablets are up 2% to 39.54. Analgesics and paracetamol tablets are up another 15% to 92p per 32 tablets with capsules up 5% to 1.37. Co-codamol is up slightly e.g. a 30 pack of 8/500 tablets are now 1.02 and a similarly sized pack of 30/500 tablets is now 1.41. Thirty-two 8/500 effervescent tablets are 2.59 and for the 30/500 strength the price is 2.87. A 6 pack of naratriptan is down 17% to 2.77, sumatriptan is again little changed and zolmitriptan is mainly down with 2.5mg tablets dropping 43% to 1.99 and the orodispersibles dropping 32% to 2.40 although a 6 pack of 5mg dispersibles is down only 1% to 15.82. A new Category M entrant is entacapone which has dropped 43% to 9.83. Anticholinesterases and further falls for donepezil where 5mg tablets are down 17% to 1.40 and a similar percentage drop for the 10mg takes them to 1.70. Category A rivastigmine remains around £20-£23. Perhaps not widely prescribed, but another new Category M entrant is riluzole with a 72% drop to 71.72 for 56x50mg tablets. Lastly, a note about temazepam where readers are probably already aware that this is being priced at £24 for 28x10mg tablets and £23 for 28x20mg tablets although the Tariff prices are 9.43 and 11.91 respectively. <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/3970.aspx> And liquid has been slowly rising for some time so that's now 55.80 for 300ml.

### ***Infections (BNF Chapter 5)***

Antibiotic prices go in both directions....21 amoxicillin 250mg capsules are up 26% to 1.55 and for 500mg capsules the increase is 11% to 1.64. But again, 21 co-amoxiclav 250/125 fall, this time by another 10% to 2.47. 28 erythromycin 250mg tablets are up 7% [again] to 1.91 but the capsules are down 2% to 7.90. Clarithromycin and 14x250mg tablets are up just 2p to 3.75 and the 500mg tablets are up 20p to 3.47. Oxytetracycline is up 4p to 1.28 but the gap with tetracycline had narrowed again as the latter drops 22% to 5.37. Trimethoprim 200mg tablets are up 11% to 1.03. Antivirals and plain acyclovir 800mg is down 15% to 5.12 whilst dispersibles have dropped less than 1% to 10.04. Famciclovir is down only pennies. Finally the antifungal terbinafine which reverses last quarter's rise by dropping 3p to 1.83 for 14.

### ***Endocrine system (BNF Chapter 6)***

Endocrine and the 28 pack of metformin 500mg is up again: by 14% to 88p while 850 mg is up 8% to 1.20. The 500mg/5ml oral solution has again

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dropped by a few pennies to 61.25, though being Category A, this tends to fall a little each month. Gliclazide 80mg is up 12% to 1.06. Category M glimepiride 2mg and 4mg are up 7% and 2% to 1.16 and 1.34 but Category A 3mg is unchanged this month at 5.49. Tolbutamide has dropped by 10% to 24.45. Some of these rises just mentioned may be off-set by continued reductions for pioglitazone which has dropped a further 27-33% so 15, 30 and 45mg now 2.86, 3.88 and 4.75. Levothyroxine tablets re up slightly: 50mcg tablets by 5% to 1.75 and 100mcg by 7% to 1.74. Bisphosphonates and alendronic acid 70mg is up 15% to 91p whilst 10mg tablets remain at 1.45. Risedronate 35mg tablets have only risen 1p to 1.20 and after generics became available last quarter, ibandronic acid has moved into Category M with the single 150mg tablet dropping 57% to 1.92 and the 28 pack of 150mg tablets dropping 72% to 38.21. Again the gap between plain and enteric coated prednisolone 5mg tablets narrows with the former up 8% to 1.04 and the latter down 10% to 3.43. Finasteride 5mg tablets are up just a penny to 1.70.

### ***Odds n' ends (BNF chapters 7-13)***

#### ***Chapter 7***

Tamsulosin 400mcg capsules are up 5p to 5.42. Oxybutinin continues to fall since its entry into Category M with 56x2.5mg now 2.44 (-28%) and 56x5mg now 3.14 (-17%). As may be expected after last quarter's entry into Category M, tolterodine drops further so 1mg now 3.73 (-30%) and 2mg now 4.36 (-22%).

#### ***Chapter 8.***

Anastrozole 1mg tablets are up just a penny to 1.94, exemestane 25mg tablets are down 27% to 7.99, letrozole 2.5mg tablets are down 14% to 1.89 and tamoxifen 20mg tablets are down 10% to 2.60. Bicalutamide 50mg is down 15% to 2.69 and 150mg is down 8% to 6.88.

#### ***Chapter 10***

NSAIDs: Ibuprofen 400mg is up a further 11% to 3.36 for 84 and 600mg are up 6% to 7.31. The 28 pack of diclofenac 50mg tablets is up 12% to 90p and 28 naproxen 500mg tablets are down 8% to 2.17. Largest faller in this chapter is actually leflunomide which is Category M and has dropped about 30% to 26.82 for 30x10mg tablets and 31.54 for a similar pack size of 20mg. Ketoprofen 2.5% gel is down 5% to 3.90 per 100g and ibuprofen 5% gel is

down 6% to 5.24 per 100g. 10% gel [Category C] is unchanged at 5.79 for 100g. Piroxicam 0.5% gel is 4.91 for 112g, a 3% fall.

### **Chapter 11.**

Hypromellose 0.3% eye drops are up 8% to 1.21. Dorzolamide 2% eye drops are down a further 10% to 2.51 but the combination with timolol is up another 6% to 3.64. Latanoprost 2.5% eye drops continue to fall, dropping 15% to 2.71 and the combination with timolol is down 28% to 6.38. Plain timolol 0.25% drops are up 10% to 1.42 and 0.5% is down 8% to 1.45. Sodium cromoglicate eye drops are down 4% to 1.72.

### **Chapter 12**

Beclometasone nasal spray is down 3p to 2.32 while the Category A budesonide nasal spray is 3.85 this month.

### **Chapter 13.**

Co-cyprindiol is up 4p to 4.90 although this has been drifting up each month. Aqueous cream is up 8% to 1.12 per 100g. Hydrocortisone 1% cream is also up by 8% taking it to 1.16 per 15g and 1% ointment is up 2% to 1.29. 2.5% cream is up 4% to 19.74 and 2.5% ointment is up 2% to 21.25 for 15g but these vary monthly as they are Category A lines. Acyclovir 5% cream is up 10% to 1.12 per 2g.