



## January 2013

Overall, I estimate this quarter's changes to be fairly neutral. Most of the commonly used Category M lines are up in price, but this is probably off-set by the larger drops for some of the lines that have decreased, particularly the new or recent Category M entries.

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

Starting as usual with Chapter 1 and PPIs, the changes are: esomeprazole 20mg and 40mg down 14% and 20% to 9.26 and 11.24. Lansoprazole is little changed with 15mg capsules up 2p to 1.19 but 30 mg capsules are down just a penny to 1.72. Omeprazole has almost all risen with 10, 20 and 40mg capsules now 1.27 (+3p), 1.31 (+4p) and 1.34 (+2p). 10mg and 20mg tablets are also up to 5.56 (+1p) and 6.97 (+1.94, 39%) but 40mg are down 11% (68p) to 5.62. Pantoprazole is up slightly, 20mg and 40mg tablets rising 6p and 3p to 1.14 and 1.60. Tablet forms of ranitidine are little changed so 150mg and 300mg now 2.01 and 2.06 but 300ml of 75mg/5ml oral solution has dropped 46% to 9.09.

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

Bendroflumethiazide 2.5mg and 5mg tablets are up 4% and 9% to 74p and 71p respectively. Reversing last quarter's decrease, furosemide 40mg is up 11% to 74p. Atenolol is up around 9% so 50mg now 72p and 100mg now 77p and it's a similar story for bisoprolol where 5mg tablets are up 9% to 1.09 and 10mg are up 12% to 1.23. Higher strength carvedilol is also up e.g. 12.5mg by 9% to 1.38 and 25mg by 1% to 1.57. The trend continues with glyceryl trinitrate 500mcg tablets which are up 8% to 2.30. Amlodipine is another line to reverse last quarter's decreases, rising around 11% to 87p and 94p for 5mg and 10mg tablets respectively. Doxazosin 4mg tablets are up 4% to 1.17. It's no different for ACE inhibitors either, so enalapril 10mg up 10% to 92p and 20mg up 15% to 1.17; lisinopril 10mg is up 7% to 89p and 20mg is up 6% to 1.02; perindopril 4mg is up 15% to 2.06 and 8mg is up 11% to 2.15; ramipril 5mg capsules are up 5% to 1.10 and 10mg capsules by 3% to 1.20. Tablets are also up and, as ever, are always more expensive than capsules. As I mentioned it last time, I must report that fosinopril 10mg tablets have halved in price to 10.43 but still remain significantly more expensive than 20mg which went up 61% to 5.90. One last ACEI to mention, captopril 25 and 50mg tablets rise 37% and 23% to 1.91 and 1.94 for 56. However, these increases are significantly offset by the reductions in ARB prices, the most significant of

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which involves the entry into Category M of irbesartan with decreases of around 70% to 2.60, 3.10 and 4.05 for 28 packs of 75, 150 and 300mg tablets. Candesartan is mixed with 4mg tablets rising 13% to 1.24 (N.B. only for 7; as before, equivalent price for 28 is more expensive than all higher strengths!), 8mg tablets rising 10% to 3.07, 16mg tablets rising 15% to 3.96 and 32mg tablets dropping just a fraction to 4.68 .Losartan is all down: 50mg down 10% to 1.50, 100mg down another 6% to 1.84, 50/12.5 combination by nearly a quarter to 2.12 and 100/25 by 12% to 3.03 . Valsartan is also down: 80mg by 8% to 2.63 and 160mg by 10% to 3.35 and the 160/12.5 combination by 20% to 3.26. Antiplatelets and aspirin 75mg dispersible is up 11% to 69p but clopidogrel 75mg is down 4% to 1.91. Statins again in alphabetical order: atorvastatin down but only between 1 and 7% so 10, 20, 40 and 80mg now 1.34, 1.78, 2.02 and 3.86; pravastatin 40mg up 16% to 2.75 and simvastatin is also up, the numbers now being: 10mg 74p (+10%), 20mg 84p (+12%), 40mg 1.05 (+6%) and 80mg 1.82 (+9%) . Note that atorvastatin has dropped each month in the last quarter - not usually what happens with Category M lines but an exception is obviously being made here....

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

Respiratory and the non-sedating antihistamines: cetirizine 10mg up 3% to 89p, loratadine 10mg up 5% to 1.03 but desloratadine drops 23% to 4.95. Not commonly used but I've just noticed that a pack of 28 salbutamol 2mg or 4mg tablets is now over £36!

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

Starting with antipsychotics in alphabetical order...olanzapine is predominantly down so 10, 15 and 20mg are now 2.67 [-7%], 3.54 [-15%] and 4.81 [-14%]. Quetiapine drops more so new prices for 25, 100, 200 and 300mg are 2.62 (-10%), 5.52 (-26%), 6.61 (-22%) and 10.50 (-8%). However, plain forms of risperidone are mostly up with 4mg being the exception. New prices for 2, 3 and 4mg are 1.61 (+6%), 1.84 (+2%) and 1.79 (-3%). Orodispersible versions again drop by only small amounts and remain more than 15 times the cost of plain. Antidepressants and citalopram 20mg is up 2% to 88p but 40mg is down a penny to 1.05. Fluoxetine 20mg is up 5% to 84p with 60mg down 7% to 48.95. Sertraline 50mg is unchanged at 1.06 whereas 100mg is down 8% to 1.22. Mirtazapine is mainly down again so 30 and 45mg plain now 1.59 (-4p) and 2.72 (-10p) while orodispersible equivalents are 1.83 (+2p) and 2.30 (-10p). Rarely mentioned but this month's biggest riser is trimipramine where 28x10mg tablets have tripled to 39.00 and 28x25mg tablets are up almost as much to 42.00. Betahistine 8mg has dropped slightly - by about 3% - to 6.66 while 16mg tablets drop a more substantial 20% to 11.74. Lamotrigine is also down so 100mg now 3.08 (-4%) and 200mg drop 9% to 4.98. Levetiracetam again shows quite substantial drops e.g. 500mg by 32% to 5.91 and 750mg by 24% to 11.47. Topiramate prices move round again so 25mg capsules are up 5% to 21.68 [these doubled in price in December!] yet tablets are down 44% to 2.71; 50mg capsules are down only slightly to 39.32 while tablets rise

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10p but are still only 3.67 ; 100mg tablets are down by one third to 3.42 and 200mg tablets are up 3p to 14.57 . Gabapentin is mainly down once again so 300mg capsules fall 12% to 3.87, 400mg capsules fall 10% to 4.62, 600mg are down just 9p to 13.00 and 800mg tablets are up 4% to 36.71. Analgesics and paracetamol is up almost 10% to 80p per 32 tablets - capsules are 1.31. Note that 250mg/5ml suspension doubled in price to 1.22 on entry into Category M this month. Co-codamol is little changed with all packs moving around by only pennies or so. Intriguingly, two strengths of diamorphine vials have moved into Category M with falls of about 7%, these being 10mg and 30mg. Sumatriptan is also little changed: 50mg up just 1p to 1.67 and 100mg down 1p to 2.14 . Zolmitriptan is all down with 2.5mg tablets dropping 20% to 3.47 and the orodispersibles are down 16% to 3.65. However, the drop for 5mg tablets is a negligible penny to 16.66 (orodispersible form only). Naratriptan is also now a Category M line and is 3.33 for 6 tablets; that's down about a quarter from last quarter's price. Yet more large drops for donepezil so 5mg tablets are down 23% to 1.69 and 10mg are down 31% to 1.98 . Category A rivastigmine drifts down just 4% so still around the £25 mark although the 6mg capsules have dropped a little more to 21.19.

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

Category M antibiotics move around but the general direction is upwards. This is particularly true for amoxicillin where 21x250mg capsules increase 16% to 1.23 and 21x500mg capsules are up 23% to 1.48 . However 21 co-amoxiclav 250/125 are down another 9% to 2.73. 28 erythromycin 250mg tablets are up 7% to 1.78 while the capsules are up 4% to 8.49. Note that the latter went up 6 fold in November. Given its off-patent status and as a more convenient alternative to erythromycin, I should mention clarithromycin more often so 14x250mg tablets are down 7% to 3.73 and 14x500mg tablets are down 6% to 3.27. 14 trimethoprim 200mg tablets are up 24% to 93p. Oxytetracycline has risen a further 11% to 1.24 while tetracycline has dropped 9% to 6.85 . Antivirals and plain aciclovir 800mg is down 33% to 6.00 whilst dispersibles are now 10.34 . Famciclovir continues a very slow downward drift but 7x750mg tablets have not been seen in Part VIII since August 2012. Finally in this chapter, terbinafine is up just 3p to 1.86 for 14.

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

Endocrine and the 28 pack of metformin 500mg is up 12% to 77p while 850mg is up 5% to 1.11 . The 500mg/5ml oral solution has dropped slightly to 62.22 . Gliclazide 80mg is up 6% to 95p. Category M glimepiride 2mg and 4mg are up 11% and 1% to 1.08 and 1.32 but Category A 3mg is down a penny to 5.51 . Tolbutamide is up a further 44% to 27.14 . However, pioglitazone has dropped by about 40% to 4.28, 5.31 and 6.61 for 15,30 and 45mg tablets. Levothyroxine has increased by 11-12% to 1.67 and 1.63 for 50 and 100mcg tablets. 25mcg tablets are up 5% to 2.77 . Alendronic acid 70mg is unchanged at 79p but the 10mg tablets are up nearly 30% to 1.44 . Risedronate 35mg is up 6% to 1.19 . Staying with bisphosphonates, the

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patent on ibandronic acid has expired and this is now a Category A line although the single 150mg tablet remains at 18.40 . The gap between plain and enteric coated prednisolone 5mg tablets narrows only slightly: the former are up 2% to 96p and the latter down 5% to 3.79 . Finasteride 5mg tablets are little changed at 1.69.

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

**Chapter 7** and tamsulosin 400mcg capsules are up 15% to 5.10 . Oxybutynin is down again so 56x2.5mg now 3.39 (-7%) and 56x5mg now 3.78 (-13%) but the big news here is the entry into Category M of tolterodine with drops of over 80% so 1mg now 5.33 and 2mg now 5.64 - this is this month's biggest price drop.

**Chapter 8.** Anastrozole 1mg tablets are up 21% to 1.94, exemestane 25mg tablets are down 2% to 10.89, letrozole 2.5mg tablets are down 8% to 2.20 and tamoxifen 20mg tablets are down 4% to 2.91 . Bicalutamide 50mg is up 1% to 3.15 but 150mg is down 6% to 7.48.

**Chapter 10** and NSAIDs: An apology about last months' comments about pack size prices not being synchronised - they are; what I had missed was that the small packs are 24s, not 28s!. 400mg is up about 9% this month to 3.01 for 84 but 600mg are only very slightly up to 5.82 . The 28 pack of diclofenac 50mg tablets is up 10% to 80p and 28 naproxen 500mg tablets are up 7% to 2.36 . Ketoprofen 2.5% gel is up 2% to 4.10 per 100g while ibuprofen 5% gel [only form listed in Part VIII] is 5.33 per 100g. 10% gel is 5.79 for 100g. For completeness, piroxicam 0.5% gel is 5.06 per 112g.

**Chapter 11.** Hypromellose 0.3% eye drops are down 2% to 1.12. Dorzolamide 2% eye drops are down 18% to 2.79 but the combination with timolol is up 6% to 3.44 . Latanoprost 2.5% eye drops are down 17% to 3.22 and the combination with timolol is down 19% to 8.81 . Plain timolol 0.25% drops are up 12% to 1.29 and 0.5% is up 39% to 1.58 .Sodium cromoglicate eye drops are up 2% to 1.80.

**Chapter 12** and the beclometasone nasal spray is up just a penny 2.35 while the budesonide nasal spray rises 2p to 3.83 . This latter is Category A so the price changes each month.

**Chapter 13.** Co-cyprindiol is up 1% to 4.77 (Category A). Aqueous cream is up 18% to 1.04 per 100g - yes, over £5 for a 500g tub! Hydrocortisone 1% cream is up 5% to 1.07 per 15g and 1% ointment is up 7% to 1.27 . 2.5% cream is 18.77 and 2.5% ointment is 21.77 for 15g. Aciclovir 5% cream is up 12% to 102p per 2g.