

Novo Nordisk halves US Ozempic price as pharma groups toe White House line

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Novo Nordisk has halved the US price of Ozempic for those who cannot access it on health insurance and offered it for home delivery as the Trump administration pushes for lower drug prices and more direct sales.

Shares in the Danish pharma group rose 6 per cent after the company said it would cut the cost of a month's supply of its blockbuster diabetes and weight-loss drug to \$499 a month. Ozempic previously cost about \$1,000 in the US for people without health insurance.

The price cut comes as Novo and its main weight-loss drug rival, Eli Lilly of the US, have lost \$252bn in market value this year because of worries about tariffs, price controls, fierce competition and the rise of copycat drugs.

The cut will affect only a small share

of US patients: Novo has said 98 per cent of those taking Ozempic have health insurance and pay \$25 or less.

The company's pharmacy division, NovoCare, will also offer Ozempic for home delivery for the first time. Direct-to-consumer drug sales have been a priority for the White House.

Novo added it was planning to offer Ozempic and its other weight-loss drug, Wegovy, through telehealth company GoodRx. Shares in GoodRx rose 35 per cent after the announcement.

The price cut is a win for President Donald Trump, who has criticised pharmaceutical companies for high drug prices in the US. In March, Novo dropped the price for Wegovy to \$499. Ozempic is primarily used to treat diabetes but is also effective for weight loss.

Novo this year terminated a partnership with US telehealth group Hims &

Hers after accusing it of deceptively marketing copycat versions of its weight-loss drugs. The dispute related to "compounded" drugs, which are made in pharmacies using the active ingredients found in branded versions.

Compounded obesity and diabetes drugs flourished after the US declared official shortages of branded drugs in 2022. The shortages were deemed to have been resolved this year, putting pharmacies on notice to stop sales.

Novo has estimated that about 1mn Americans are taking copycat versions of Ozempic. The FDA published a safety warning about unapproved, compounded weight-loss drugs this month.

Last week, Eli Lilly said it would increase the UK price of its weight-loss drug Mounjaro by 170 per cent. Trump has accused European nations of being "freeloaders".