

Unfortunately, said Noseworthy the health unit has sometimes had to reduce the number of doses sent. In some instances, the regular flu shot (quadrivalent) has been substituted for a high dose request. The health unit currently has no high dose vaccines available. It is unknown, at this time, the number of additional doses will be received from the province.

The health unit does not supply pharmacies which are struggling to keep up with demand. Some pharmacies have had to create wait lists and are working to whittle these down as quickly as possible.

Board of Health chair Doug Elmslie said he has spoken with a number of pharmacies in the Fenelon Falls area who have asked the health unit to plead their case to the province.

“Many are running short (of vaccine) and worry about their customers,” said Elmslie, many of whom are elderly.

Dr. Ian Gemmill, who will serve as interim medical officer of health between Noseworthy’s retirement Dec. 15 and April 5 when Dr. Natalie Bocking takes over, said the situation is “distressing” but pointed out the pandemic could potentially provide an “upside”. He explained, in southern hemisphere countries where winter occurs during Canada’s summer, there were reports of reduced numbers of influenza cases. He hopes the same will happen here.

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“It’s a case of viral competition,” said Gemmill. “When there is another virus