IA/Navigation Model Explorations & Audit: Sort by Primary Navigation Type

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING APP NAVIGATION MODEL UI
1. Extensible & future proof
2. Default landing screen provides space for dynamic personalization--both content & tools
3. Default landing screen provides space for featured content or tools (incl.cross-references)
4. Core navigation is the same for every user
5. Supports user mental model buckets, taxonomy and site map
6. Is accessible (cognitive disabilities, assistive technology)
   - parse info quickly (less is more)
   - clear, well-known navigation pattern
   - makes it clear where the user is at all times
7. Adheres to native mobile platform guidelines & best practices for both iOS & Android
   - supports efficient navigation
   - Default/initial screen is easily accessible from any other screen within a few taps
8. Feasible within React Native
9. Doesn't impact responsiveness/speed negatively

✅ = Meets all criteria

✅ = Meets some criteria

❌ = Does not meet criteria

✅
✅
❌

Tab bar = categories only

V14 - Profile on home as Veteran's name, settings secondary

Home | Profile | Settings

✅ ATty - How do users know to tap on ID card/profile?

✅ BR - Where is the evergreen contact us/location content?
MBP - Settings icon is in a really odd place (typically reserved for back/cancel actions)

How do categories & features work? (Do they make it clear where the user is at all times?)

EK - v1

Home | Origins | Profile

❌ BR, No room to grow in global nav (Where would something like search live?)
ATty - read aloud order for evergreen content feels too prominent
ATty - icons need labels

Home - What's on the home screen if there are no updates/actions to take?
How do categories & features work? (Do they make it clear where the user is at all times?)

EK - v2

Home | Contact Us | Profile

❌ BR - No room to grow in global nav (Where would something like search live?)
ATty - icons need labels
ATty - read aloud order for evergreen content feels too prominent

Home - What's on the home screen if there are no updates/actions to take?
How do categories work? (makes it clear where the user is at all times?)
How do categories & features work? (Do they make it clear where the user is at all times?)

V6 - profile in tab bar

Home | Category landing | Section landing | Subsection/Task | Profile

❌ BR - No room to grow in global nav, but handled in top bar

Search feels like it'd be a higher priority & more suitable as a global action than Profile

V19- Tab Nav & Waffle grid as hub in category

Home | Category landing | Section landing | Subsection/Task

✅ ATty - category landing needs labels under items
ATty - Is a grid scrollable/parsable enough?

(second row left wireframe)

Home | Contact Us | Profile | Settings

❌ BR - No room to grow in global nav (Where would something like search live?)
BR - Where is the evergreen location content?

Home - What's on the home screen if there are no updates/actions to take?
How do categories & features work?

EK - v3

Home | Profile | Health

✅ ATty: profile icon needs a label

✅ BR: What's on the home screen if there are no updates?
How does a child of Profile or Health work? (thinking about done button)

Tab bar = categories only + More

V2 - more in tab bar, profile in nav bar

Home | More Co. | Subsection/Task landing | Detail view

✅ MBP - More feels like a potential junk drawer - items aren't as discoverable, poor use of space

Would search in top bar be prominent enough, or should it be a global action?

While the "more" icon allows for more items it could potentially be hiding key navigational elements. This is where metrics can come in and make sure that the main elements are not hiding behind the hamburger menu.

Consider making the menu accessible to a screenreader by hiding the icon and adding appropriate aria labels like "open the menu" to make it clear that it is a menu.

V4 - more in tab bar (profile in more)

Home | More

✅ MBP - More feels like a potential junk drawer - items aren't as discoverable, poor use of space

✅ Would search in top bar be prominent enough? Right side = global action, but top bar is a less common place for search

V3 Home = account; profile + more
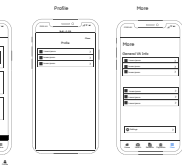
Home | Profile | More

✅ MBP - More feels like a potential junk drawer - items aren't as discoverable, poor use of space

✅ Would search in top bar be prominent enough? Left side = not a global action
Home - What's on the home screen if there are no updates/actions to take?
Where is the evergreen contact us/location content?
How do categories & features work?

## Tab bar = features + categories

V18- "Tasks" in tab bar

Home | Task list | Subsection/Task

❌ BR - No room to grow in global nav.

If tasks live on "tasks" what else goes on home? Should important/contextual tasks be more prominent (not hidden behind a tap)?
Would search in top bar be prominent enough? Right side = global action, but top bar is a less common place for search

V9 - profile in nav bar, letters in global nav

Home | Category landing | Subsection/Task landing | Profile

✅ BR - No room to grow in global nav

Would search in top bar be prominent enough? Right side = global action, but top bar is a less common place for search

V15 - profile in nav bar, categories as top tabs
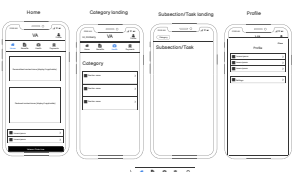
Home | Category landing | Subsection/Task landing | Profile

❌ MBP atypical location for tab navigation (top usually used to distinguish between categories of the same data type, not as primary nav)--users will need to learn it
ATty: tab navigation not in thumb zone

V1 - profile in nav bar (room to grow in tab bar)

EK - v4

Home | Category landing | Subsection/Task landing | Detail view | Profile | Settings

✅ passes all criteria

read aloud order for crisis line?

What is displayed if there isn't any featured content or personalize items?

It is possible there are too many things on the home screen- would it be possible to thin it out?

Tab bar = personalized + everything else

V16- Tab bar contains browse section w taxonomy

Home | Browse | Subsection | Subsection/Task landing

❌ ATty - Two ambiguous categories = hard to know what the app is about at a glance.
ATty - HGD: Too few tabs can lead to categories or modes that are too broad to be useful, requiring people to select a tab to find out what it contains.
ATty - Browse tab will be very long (cognitive overload)
MBP - Requires returning to home or browse in order to switch tasks, can't hold your place (atypical for iOS)

No category landing screens to summarize section content that doesn't deserve to be on home
Home - What's on the home screen if there are no updates/actions to take?

V16a- Tab bar contains browse section w taxonomy

Home | Browse | Subsection | Detail view | Profile

IA/Navigation Model Explorations & Audit: Sort by Primary Navigation Type

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING APP NAVIGATION
MODEL UI
1. Extensible & future proof
2. Default landing screen provides space for dynamic personalization—both content & tools
3. Default landing screen provides space for featured content or tools (incl cross-references)
4. Core navigation is the same for every user
5. Supports user mental model buckets, taxonomy and site map
6. Is accessible (cognitive disabilities, assistive technology)
 · parse info quickly (less is more)
 · clear, well-known navigation pattern
 · makes it clear where the user is at all times
7. Adheres to native mobile platform guidelines & best practices for both iOS & Android
 · supports efficient navigation
 · Default/initial screen is easily accessible from any other screen within a few taps
8. Feasible within React Native
9. Doesn't impact responsiveness/speed negatively

✅ = Meets all criteria
🟨 = Meets some criteria
❌ = Does not meet criteria

✅
🟨

Tab bar = features only

V5- Home as Hub, tab bar contains top tasks

🟨 Atty - Taxonomy on home = Lots of choices, Home tab will be very long, esp if there's personalized content (cognitive overload?) - harder to parse info quickly
BR - can't personalize/change important tasks per user when they are global navigation
MBP- Requires returning to home in order to switch tasks that aren't in tab bar (home = hub)

would tasks that are organized under categories also appear in the tab bar?

V20- Favorites, notifications, browse, action

🟨 MBP & atty - Placement of home icon = Not a well known mobile pattern
MBP & atty - Difficult for users to tell where they are in taxonomy
atty - Taxonomy on browse = Lots of choices; tab will be very long, esp if there's personalized content (cognitive overload?) - harder to parse info quickly
atty - features/categories are less discoverable, requires a tap to see what the app is capable of at a glance
❌ A potential issue with browse is none of the high level buckets are showing making them less discoverable and more clicks to get to what they are looking for.

atty - is category grid too hard to scan?
browse = essentially an android drawer, but treated in an unconventional way
Home & favorites feel like the same tab

Are the things in 'do a thing' contextual or global? Why require an extra tap to display them

Nontraditional tab bar

V13- Do a thing FAB - actions are contextual

❌ MBP atypical location for tab navigation (top usually used to distinguish between categories of the same data type, not as primary nav)—users will need to learn it
atty - FAB actions require a tap to see what's possible in each context - not discoverable or screen reader friendly

V17- Embedded dropdown as main nav

❌ MBP & atty - Dropdown used to change categories or features= not a well known navigation pattern - how would that work as a menu with a screenreader?
MBP & atty - dropdown primary nav pattern hides navigation options behind a tap, doesn't show what else possible to navigate to when you're in a section, requires a tap to see what the app is capable of.

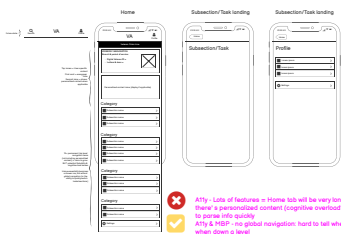Were would a global feature like search live?
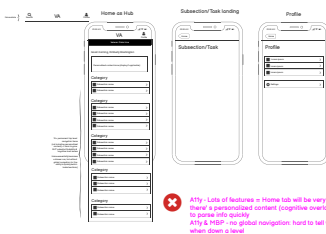
Home as Hub

V8 - Home as Hub w Category screens
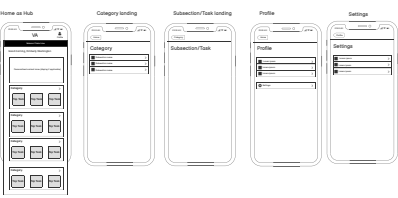
❌ Atty - Lots of features = Home tab will be very long, esp if there's personalized content (cognitive overload?) - harder to parse info quickly
🟨 Atty & MBP- no global navigation to tell where user is when down a level
MBP - Requires returning to home or browse in order to switch tasks, can't hold your place (atypical for iOS)

V10- Home = Account/Hub (no category screens), profile in nav bar

❌ Atty - Lots of features = Home tab will be very long, esp if there's personalized content (cognitive overload?) - harder to parse info quickly
🟨 Atty & MBP - no global navigation: hard to tell where user is when down a level
MBP - Requires returning to home or browse in order to switch tasks, can't hold your place (atypical for iOS)

V12 - Quartiles as hub

❌ Atty & MBP - no global navigation/atypical navigation pattern: hard to tell where user is when down a level
atty - quartiles aren't as scannable
atty & MBP - atypical location/treatment for back/home

evergreen content will be read first by scfreenr eader - too prominent?

V7 - Home as Hub (no category screens), profile in nav bar

❌ Atty - Lots of features = Home tab will be very long, esp if there's personalized content (cognitive overload?) - harder to parse info quickly
Atty & MBP - no global navigation: hard to tell where user is when down a level
MBP - Requires returning to home or browse in order to switch tasks, can't hold your place (atypical for iOS)
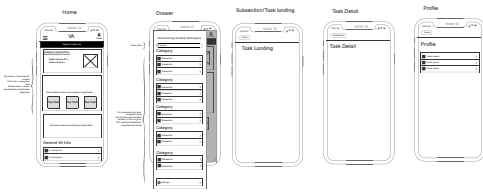
Drawer

V11- Home = Account/personalized stuff; categories in drawer
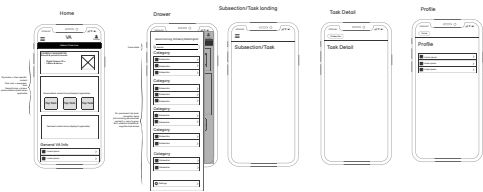
🟨 atty- in a drawer, features/categories are less discoverable, requires a tap to see what the app is capable of at a glance
atty - long list of options is harder to parse
A potential issue with the drawer is "out of sight out of mind." Difficult to discover the main buckets.
MBP - drawer isn't a common iOS pattern

atty - in order for search to be globally accessible, drawer need to be displayed globally, so users can switch between features

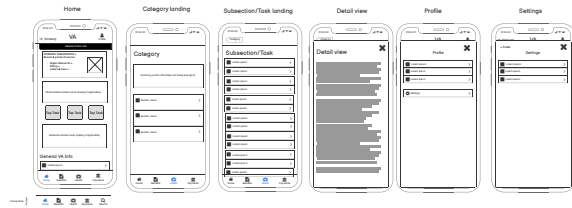### V11b- Home = Account/personalized stuff; categories in drawer

🟨 atty- in a drawer, features/categories are less discoverable, requires a tap to see what the app is capable of at a glance
atty - long list of options is harder to parse
atty & MBP - global nav disappears at subsection level, requires user to return to home & tap to reopen drawer
MBP - drawer isn't a common iOS pattern
A potential issue with the drawer is "out of sight out of mind." Difficult to discover the main buckets.

IA/Navigation Model Explorations & Audit: FINALISTS

⭐ Tab bar = features + categories

V1 - profile in nav bar, profile & detail views as overlay

Home | Category landing | Subsection/Task landing | Detail view | Profile | Settings

✅ Issues:
· passes all criteria

Questions:
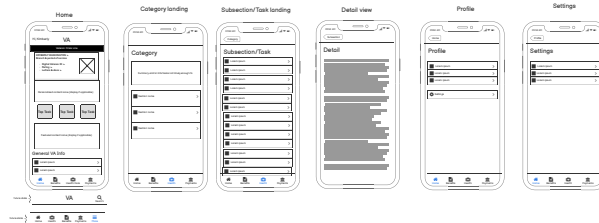· read aloud order for crisis line?
· modal treatment for detail views, profile (settings is nested, potential multistep subtasks) - ok per ENG?

Strengths:
· Meets all business criteria
· permanent, personalized homescreen piece (personal summary)
· adheres to MBP, uses known UI pattern for global navigation
· User can tell where they are at all levels (tab bar, descriptive back button labels, differences in density of info between levels)
· Room for different levels of summary based on timeliness & urgency (home v category)

Tab bar = categories only

V14 - Profile on home as Veteran's name

Home | Category landing | Subsection/Task landing | Detail view | Profile | Settings
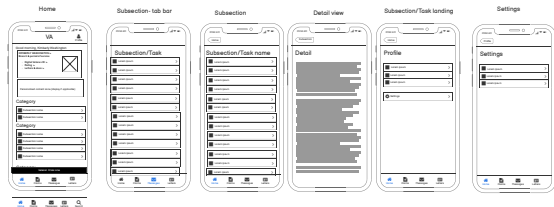
✅ Issues:
· passes all criteria

Questions:
· Putting profile into a card on the home screen is a more unexpected pattern for this info than a profile category in the nav or top bar (is it enough?)
· read aloud order for crisis line?
· Would search icon in top bar be prominent enough? Right

Strengths:
· Meets all business criteria
· permanent, personalized homescreen piece (personal summary)
· adheres to MBP, uses known UI pattern for global navigation
· User can tell where they are at all levels (tab bar, descriptive back button labels, differences in density of info between levels)
· Room for different levels of summary based on timeliness & urgency (home v category)

Tab bar = features only

V5- Home as Hub, tab bar contains top tasks

Home | Subsection- tab bar | Subsection | Detail view | Subsection/Task landing | Settings

🟨 Issues:
· A11y - Home tab will be very long, esp if there's personalized content - harder to parse info quickly
· A11y/MBP -tab bar doesn't give you a sense of where you are in the app (atypical)
· BR - Can't personalize/change important tasks per user if they are part of global navigation, so this placement is less effective than in-content important tasks (which can vary per user)
· Requires returning to home in order to switch tasks that aren't in tab bar (home = hub)
· Duplication of some features beween tab bar & home

Strengths:
· Meets all business criteria
· permanent, personalized homescreen piece (personal summary)
· uses known UI pattern for global navigation

⭐ V5a- Home as Hub, tab bar contains top tasks

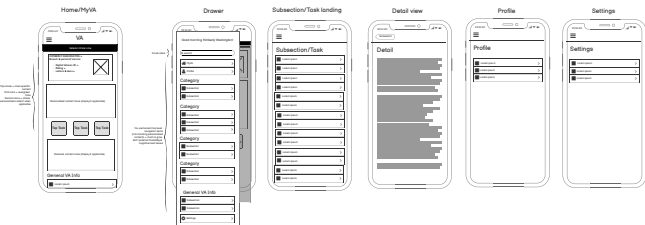Home | Category landing | Subsection- tab bar | Subsection | Detail view | Profile | Settings

🟨 Issues:
· A11y/MBP - tab bar doesn't give you a sense of where you are in the app (atypical)
· BR: can't personalize/change important tasks per user when they are global navigation, so this placement is less effective than in-content important tasks (which can vary per user)
· Requires returning to home in order to switch tasks that aren't in tab bar (home = hub)
· Duplication of some features beween tab bar & home

Strengths:
· Meets all business criteria
· permanent, personalized homescreen piece (personal summary)
· uses known UI pattern for global navigation
· User can tell where they are at all levels (descriptive back button labels, differences in density of info between levels)
· Room for different levels of summary based on timeliness & urgency (home v category)

Drawer

V11a- Home = Personalized stuff; categories in drawer

Home/MyVA | Drawer | Subsection/Task landing | Detail view | Profile | Settings

🟨 Issues:
1. A11y - in a drawer, features/categories one less discoverable, requires a tap to see what the app is capable of at a glance
2. A11y - A potential issue with the drawer is "out of sight out of mind."
3. A11y - long list of options in drawer is harder to parse (cognitive overload)
4. MBP - drawer isn't a common iOS pattern, and is less common even on Android as primary nav
5. In order for search to be globally accessible, drawer need to be displayed globally, so users can switch between features
6. If drawer includes ALL of the app's taxonomy, it will duplicate evergreen homescreen items
7. No category landing screens to summarize section content that doesn't deserve to be on home

Questions:
· read aloud order for crisis line?
· Putting profile link only into a card on the home screen is a more unexpected pattern for this info than a profile category in the nav or top bar (is it discoverable enough?)

Strengths:
· Meets all business criteria
· permanent, personalized homescreen piece (personal summary)
· adheres to MBP, uses known UI pattern for global navigation
· A strength of the browse is being able to see everything all at once.
· User can switch to any section of the app without traversing a hierarchy

Tab bar = personalized + everything else

V16a- Tab bar contains browse section w taxonomy

Home/MyVA | Browse | Subsection name | Detail view | Profile | Settings

❌ Issues:
1. A11y/MBP - "functionally, the "browse" tab is the same as an Android drawer, but uses an unexpected UI pattern to reveal it. Also unusual in mobile to only have 2 icons in tab bar
2. A11y/MBP - Two ambiguous categories (out of 3) = hard to know what the app is about a glance, requiring people to select a tab to find out what it contains.
3. A11y- A potential issue wtht the browse tab is "out of sight out of mind."
4. A11y - Browse tab will be very long & harder to parse
5. A11y/MBP - Global nav disappears at subsection/feature level
6. If browse includes ALL of the app's taxonomy, it will duplicate evergreen homescreen items
7. No category landing screens to summarize section content that doesn't deserve to be on home
8. With this option, we are making settings the most discoverable category (research & BR suggests this is the wrong hierarchy.)

Questions:
· Will users discover & understand the purpose of the Browse tab?
· read cloud order for crisis line?

Strengths:
· Meets all business criteria
· permanent, personalized homescreen piece (personal summary)
· adheres to MBP, uses known UI pattern for global navigation
· User is able to see everything all at once in browse tab
· User can switch to any section of the app without traversing a hierarchy

⭐ V16b- Tab bar contains browse section w taxonomy

Home | Menu | Subsection | Detail view | Profile | Settings

❌ 🟨 Issues:
1. A11y/MBP: Two ambiguous categories = harder to know what the app is about at a glance, requiring people to select the browse tab to find out what it contains, features/categories are less discoverable
2. A11y - A potential issue with the browse tab is "out of sight out of mind."
3. A11y - long list of options in drawer is harder to parse (cognitive overload)
4. A11y/MBP - Global nav disappears at subsection/feature level
5. If browse includes ALL of the app's taxonomy, it will duplicate evergreen homescreen items
6. With this option, we are making profile the most discoverable category (research & BR suggests this is the wrong hierarchy).
7. No category landing screens to summarize section content that doesn't deserve to be on home

Questions:
· Will users discover & understand the purpose of the Menu tab?
· read aloud order for crisis line?

Strengths:
· Meets all business criteria
· permanent, personalized homescreen piece (personal summary)
· User is able to see everything all at once in menu tab