

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

COVID-19 Vaccine Taxonomy

Research Findings

Chris Logan

clogan@governmentcio.com

VSA Facilities Team

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[GitHub Research Folder](#)

Background

Facilities needs a better understanding of how Veterans expect to find health services at VA as a foundational part of improving the Veteran search experience. Research took place through the Facilities lens:

- Facility Locator
- Health Services
- VAMC Product

What we need to do

Learn how we can support Veterans who search for vaccination services at VA health care systems.

Research goal

Learn the Veteran mental models for vaccination within the health service taxonomy, primarily for VAMCs.

- Research covers vaccines such as COVID-19, Influenza, Tetanus (Tdap), Shingles and travel-related vaccines
- **Today's focus: COVID-19 vaccine-related information**

Updated findings for other vaccines to come ASAP for teams and stakeholders.

Research Questions

- Where in the VHA taxonomy do Veterans expect COVID-19 vaccination services to be found?
 - For example, do they expect to find it under primary care, with pharmacy (related to "medication"), under a particular specialty; or within a taxon named "Vaccination" (or similar)?
- What words do Veterans use when searching - such as:
 - Vaccine/vaccination vs immunization vs shot
 - Coronavirus vs COVID

Method

Remote, **moderated card sorting** sessions were conducted via Zoom

We spoke with **9 Veterans**:

- All visited a VA facility for health care over the last year.
- Ages 35 to 74
- Major metropolitan and rural areas
- Female and male
- Diverse ethnic backgrounds
- Diverse levels of education
- Varying disability ratings

Research Findings

Findings Summary

- The majority of Veterans associated COVID-19 as a unique event, and most expected to see COVID-19 information in **Other Services**, or in its **own category**.
- Veterans generally expected one of two types of information about the COVID-19 vaccine:
 - Information on how to sign up for the vaccine, where they would receive it, and what priority groups they would be a part of.
 - Information about the vaccine itself, its effectiveness, possible side effects and whether and when a second shot should be received.
- Most Veterans expected to use search terms COVID or COVID-19, but not Coronavirus when searching for COVID-19 vaccine-related information.
- Veterans all connected with and expected to use terms such as vaccine, vaccination and shot, and expected those terms to be seen on VA.gov.

Additional Findings

- Veterans generally expected one of two types of information about the COVID-19 vaccine:
 - Information on how to sign up for the vaccine, where they would receive it, and what priority groups they would be a part of.
 - Information about the vaccine itself, its effectiveness, possible side effects and whether and when a second shot should be received.
- The majority of Veterans receive vaccines at least periodically. The Flu and Tetanus shots are the most commonly received.
- Many Veterans receive vaccines regularly.
- A couple of Veterans are vaccine-hesitant.

Recommendations

Recommendations Summary

- Add a dedicated, easy-to-spot content section for COVID-19 vaccine information on Health Services pages (Facilities Locator, Health Services, VAMC Product). This will help Veterans locate the information, regardless of which category they anticipate would contain COVID-19 vaccine information. Cross-link to this content from other content.
- In the dedicated COVID-19 section, provide these two types of information:
 - Information about how and when to sign up for a vaccine (or sign up to be notified when that information is available), what to expect, and contacts for further information.
 - Information on the vaccines themselves, including facts about COVID-19, vaccine benefits, effectiveness and possible side effects.

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Include an update in findings about other vaccine types discussed in the sessions.
- Share additional findings with other teams and stakeholders.

Appendix
