

Pre-check-in usability research

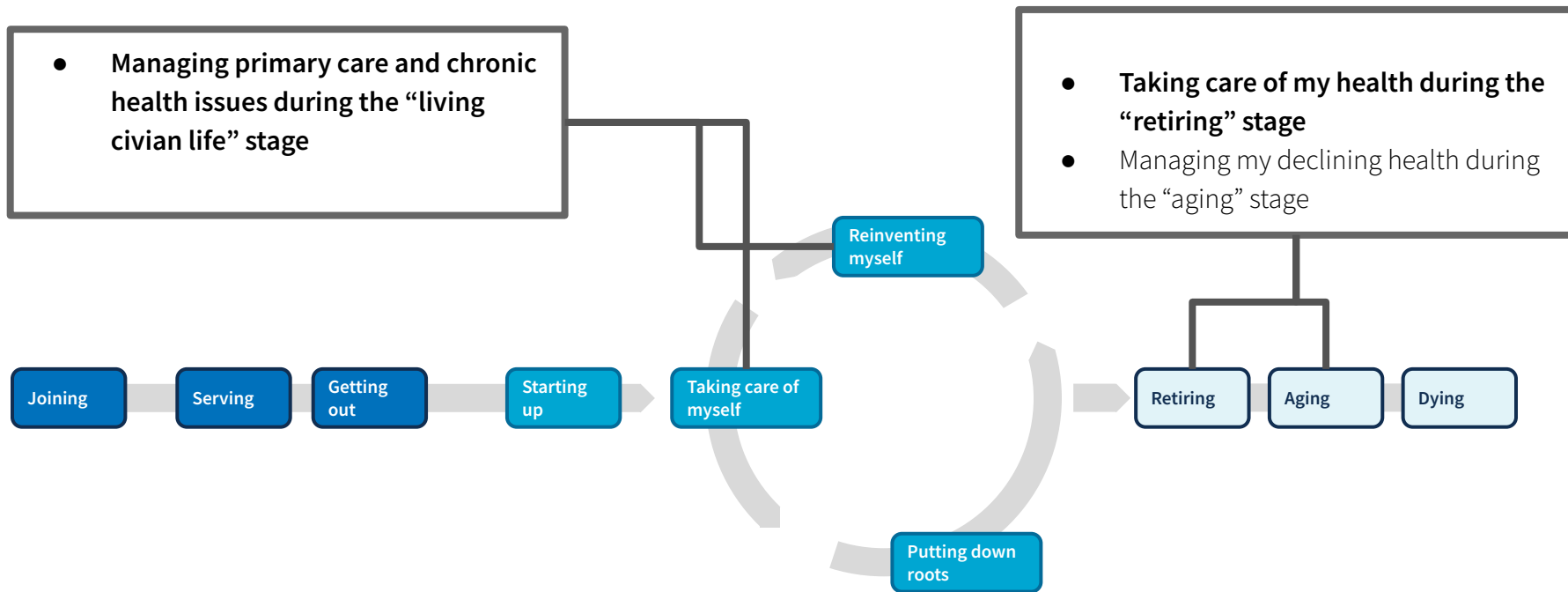
Background, Findings & Recommendations



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How this research maps to the Veteran journey

Pre-check-in usability study | 11, 30, 2021



For a fully detailed Veteran journey, go to

<https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/platform/design/va-product-journey-maps/Veteran%20Journey%20Map.pdf>

Serving and separation

Living civilian life

Retiring and aging

VA



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OCTO-DE goals that this research supports

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Supported

Not supported

Veterans and their families can apply for all benefits online

Veterans and their families can find a single, authoritative source of information

Veterans and their families trust the security, accuracy, and relevancy of VA.gov

Veterans can manage their health services online

VFS teams can build and deploy high-quality products for Veterans on the Platform

Logged-in users have a personalized experience, with relevant and time-saving features

Logged-in users can update their personal information easily and instantly

Logged-in users can easily track applications, claims, or appeals online

Measures to increase

Completion rate of online transactions

Percent of applications submitted online (vs. paper)

Veteran satisfaction with VA.gov Benefit use and enrollment, across all business lines

Benefit value (in \$) delivered from online applications or transactions

Number of VA.gov users as a function of total Veteran population

Usage of digital, self-service tools

Measures to decrease

Time to successful complete and submit online transactions

Time to process online applications (vs. paper)

Call center volume, wait time, and time to resolution

Time from online benefit discovery to benefit delivery

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We're exploring the concept of pre-check-in

Pre-check-in tasks

- Confirming the appointment
- Reviewing contact information
- Reviewing next of kin
- Answering health questions

Expected outcomes

- Streamline the day of check-in for veterans and staff
- Increase usage of mobile check-in on day of appointment
- Providers feel more prepared
- Staff have more time for other critical tasks

Test if the pre-check-in user flow meets Veterans needs

Verify the user flow

- Understand users behavior before an appointment
- Verify expectations and usability of reviewing/editing contact info and next of kin
- Verify expectations on answering health questions
- Figure out the useful next steps for users after pre-check-in

Improve proposed content

- The guidance and framing of pre-check-in
- Address labels
- Content the confirmation page

Who we talked to

Tested with 11 participants

- 6 male; 5 female
- 7 Android users; 4 iOS users
- 1 lives with a cognitive impairment and/or functional disability
- 1 identifies as LGBTQ+
- 3 over the age of 55

Findings may not include the perspectives of the following underserved Veteran groups

- Don't have a degree
- Identify as Latinx, Biracial, Asian, + Native
- Use of assistive technology (AT)

We recommend studies with these underserved groups in the future.

Observational and task-based usability testing

Duration

- 1 hour (includes prototype testing and post-task Interview)

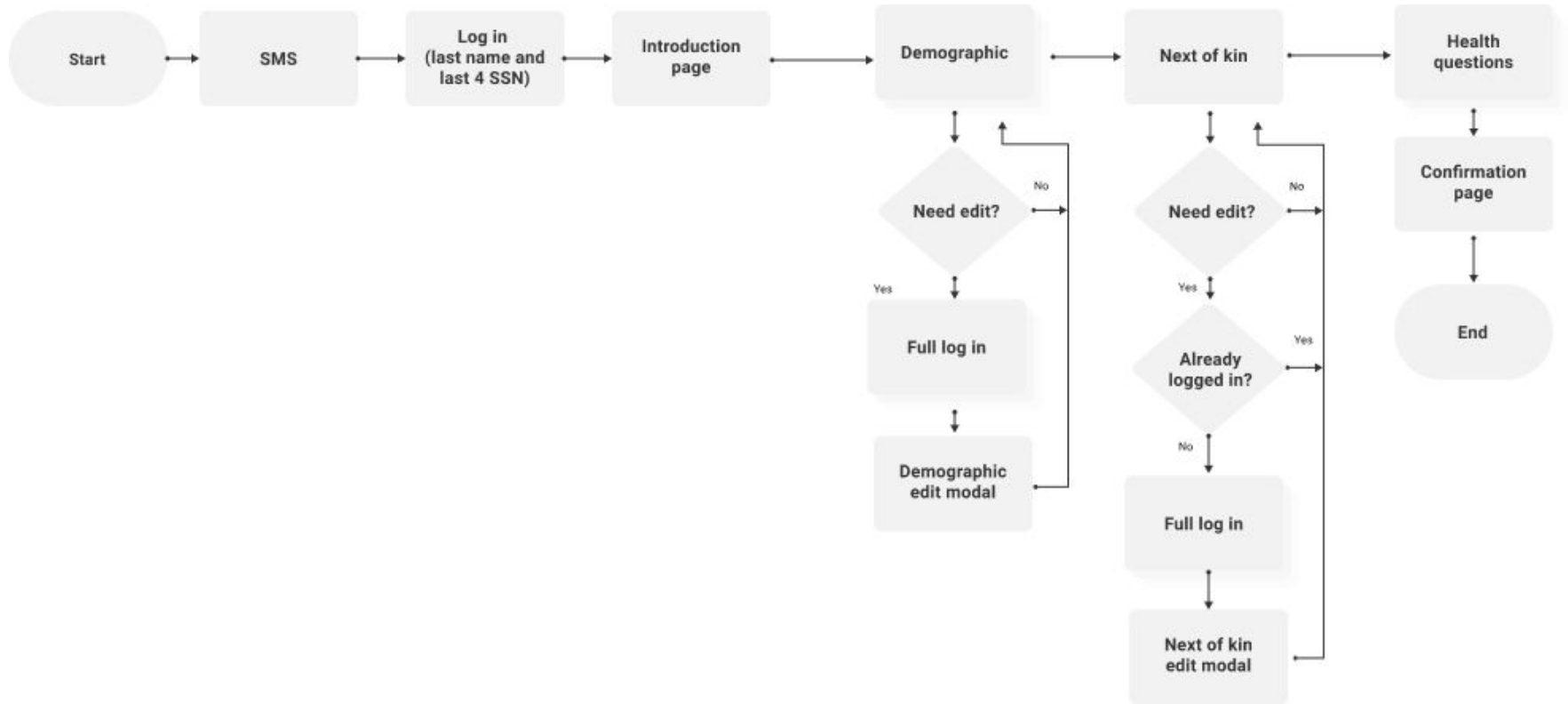
Tools

- UXPin mobile prototype on the Veteran's device
- Remote sessions conducted over Zoom

4 Prototype variations

- [Dependent upon confirmation & form](#)
- [Dependent upon confirmation & task](#)
- [Same time as confirmation & form](#)
- [Same time as confirmation & task](#)

Full log-in is required for editing demographic or next of kin



Two different SMS flows

- 1) The pre-check-in link is sent only *after* the veteran confirms appointment
- 2) The pre-check-in link is sent after the appointment reminder SMS is sent; no confirmation required.

The SMS of 1)

Your VA appointment is on
JUN 8 at 09:30.

Reply:
Y1 to CONFIRM
N1 to CANCEL
D1 for DETAILS

For more info call
909-825-7084 options 2 or
reply HELP.

Got a fever, cold, cough or flu-
like symptoms? Stay home
and phone VA first: [909](tel:9098257084)
[825-7084](tel:9098257084) ext. 5085.

Don't catch the bug. Ask your
provider to receive your flu
shot! Get yours at the VA or
anytime at Walgreens
Pharmacy.

Find a location of the closest
pharmacy here: [https://
go.usa.gov/xGQk2](https://go.usa.gov/xGQk2)

Send STOP to end messages.

Y1

Thank you for confirming! To
help us prepare for your
appointment, please complete
this form: [https://go.usa.gov/
xxxxx](https://go.usa.gov/xxxxx)

The SMS of 2)

Your VA appointment is on
JUN 8 at 09:30.

Reply:
Y1 to CONFIRM
N1 to CANCEL
D1 for DETAILS

For more info call
909-825-7084 options 2 or
reply HELP.

Got a fever, cold, cough or flu-
like symptoms? Stay home
and phone VA first: [909](tel:9098257084)
[825-7084](tel:9098257084) ext. 5085.

Don't catch the bug. Ask your
provider to receive your flu
shot! Get yours at the VA or
anytime at Walgreens
Pharmacy.

Find a location of the closest
pharmacy here: [https://
go.usa.gov/xGQk2](https://go.usa.gov/xGQk2)

Send STOP to end messages.

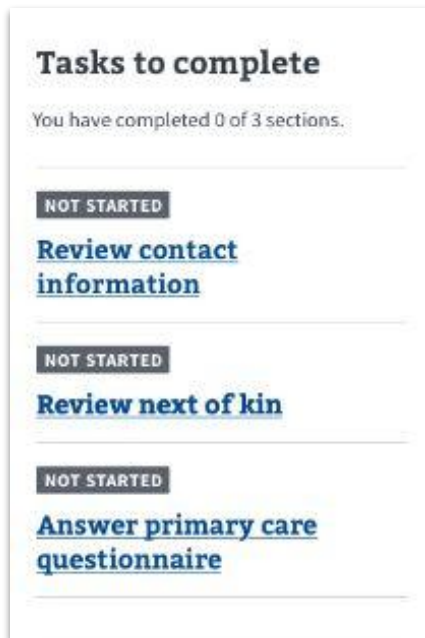


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Two design patterns

- 1) The pre-check-in tasks are displayed in a task layout design
- 2) The pre-check-in tasks are displayed using the form design

The introduction page of 1)



Tasks to complete

You have completed 0 of 3 sections.

NOT STARTED

[Review contact information](#)

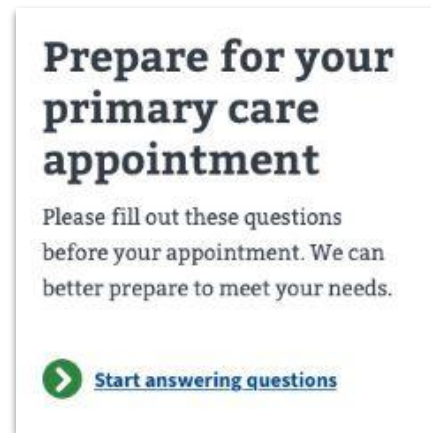
NOT STARTED

[Review next of kin](#)

NOT STARTED


[Answer primary care questionnaire](#)

The introduction page of 2)



Prepare for your primary care appointment

Please fill out these questions before your appointment. We can better prepare to meet your needs.

 [Start answering questions](#)

Key steps in pre-check-in user flow

Log in (last name and SSN)

Prepare for your primary care appointment

We need some information to verify your identity to check you in.

Your last name

Last 4 digits of your Social Security number

[Continue](#)

Need help?

Ask a staff member.

Introduction page (form or task list)

Prepare for your primary care appointment

Please fill out these questions before your appointment. We can better prepare to meet your needs.

[Start answering questions](#)

What happens after I answer the questions?

Will VA protect my personal health information?

We make every effort to keep your personal information private and secure.

[Read more about privacy and security on VA.gov](#)

Contact Information

Review and update your current contact information

i Your changes will update your information across VA.

Mailing address

1221 Douglas Way
Douglas, MA 00000

[Edit](#)

Home address

15431 Boston Road Apt 1C
Boston, MA 00000

[Edit](#)

Home phone

555-555-5555

[Edit](#)

Mobile phone

555-555-5555

[Edit](#)

Work phone

555-555-5555

[Edit](#)

Edit model

Edit mailing address

i Your changes will update your information across VA.

☐ I live on a United States military base outside of the United States.

Country **(*Required)**

USA

Street address

1221 Douglas Way

Street address line 2

Street address line 3


City **(*Required)**

VA

Key steps in pre-check-in user flow

Review Next of Kin

Review and update your next of kin.

 Your changes will update your information across VA.

Name
Barbara Allen

Edit

Relationship
Spouse

Edit

Address
1221 Douglas Way
Douglas, MA 00000

Edit

Home phone
555-555-5555

Edit

Mobile phone
555-555-5555

Edit

Health questions page

Reason: Routine or follow-up visit


Are there any additional details you'd like to share with your provider about this appointment? (*Required)

Pain in right knee after surgery

« Back

Continue »

Confirmation page

 **Your information has been sent to your provider.**

Your provider will discuss the information on your questionnaire during your appointment:

Please bring your insurance cards with you to your appointment.

Date: Wednesday, September 15, 2020
Time: 12:30 p.m. ET
Location: CHY PC CASSIDY,
Douglas VA Medical Center

View and print your answers

Finding #1

Pre-check-in is valued (with one caveat)

Majority of Veterans seem to value the ability to complete pre-check in, if they don't have to do so for every appointment.

“This looks great – if it can make my visit easier or more simple then I like it.”

“If you have a lot of appointments this could get annoying.”



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Finding #2

Veteran experience linked to service design

Veterans linked the value of completing pre-check-in questions with the staff and providers ability to use the information

“I’d be upset if I got to the appointment and would have to do this all again.”

“Anything to streamline the veteran experience....make it easier for the veteran the better.”

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Finding #3

Usable design, but questions on content

Veterans found the pre-check-in flow clear and easy to use.

Veterans were able to complete tasks without experiencing major usability issues.

However, some Veterans were unclear whether they were confirming their appointments

“I’m pleased...it’s easy to understand.”

“I would not expect an entire thing to fill out after a confirmation of an appointment I would have been done and moved on.”



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Finding #4

Some pages were unexpected in the user flow

- While majority didn't mind reviewing Next of Kin, a few were triggered and surprised
- All Veterans expected (and some preferred) to fill out emergency contact in addition to Next of Kin
- Being prompted to fully authenticate when asked to edit information surprised majority of veterans

“Are they expecting me to die during this [appointment]?”

“Next of kin? Why not emergency contact?”



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Desktop experience is important

Pre-check-in on desktop provides value to veterans who prefer larger screen

“I’d prefer to do it on an iPad or on a desktop. It would work on my phone, too – but it is a little more difficult with my disability.”

“I prefer a desktop because of the size and I am a keyboarder. I am decent at texting but I prefer the keyboard because I grew up on typewriters. “

Mistrust over whether info gets updated across VA

While Veterans valued having their info updated across VA, however, questioned whether that will happen. This seemed to be based on previous poor experience

“...If it isn’t [updated across VA] then you won’t get people to trust this...It is challenging to go in and not have the doctor prepared.”

“ We just bought a house and moved... I updated [my info] but my mail is still going somewhere else...”

Full authentication can be polarizing

- For some Veterans, full authenticating was either a blocker or a motivator to completing pre-check in
- Few thought they were already fully logged in

“I would hope that I could not even see that info unless I was logged in. I would want to know why I have to log in to edit if entering last name and last 4 allowed me to view. You should have to log in from the start.”

“I see this as double assurance.”

Secondary findings



Notification method depends on veteran device and usage habits



Preference for design patterns used in the industry



Home address is clearer than permanent address; More label testing with target user groups will be helpful

Recommendations

Near Term

1. Clarify content to better set up expectations related to next of kin, authentication, and that they are completing pre-check in
2. Add emergency contact (review and eventually edit) into the pre-check-in experience
3. Develop guidelines for how often we would like veterans to complete pre-check in updates



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Recommendations

Long Term

1. Evaluate staff-facing pre-check-in workflow, which may affect pre-check-in engagement in the long term
2. Clearly explain where information gets updated across VA to better set up expectations for veteran, which may also help build trust
3. Re-evaluate pre-check-in being dependent upon confirmation and where it fits within the holistic appointment flow
4. Better understand the authenticated experience and use cases to identify how best to set up expectations to fully authenticate when editing info.



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