

# VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery

Inquiry and concept test

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Background

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

In 2021 the VAOS and MHV teams completed a gap analysis on the scheduling features between the two tools.

This research is a follow-up to that gap analysis. Our goals were:

- Evaluate scheduling features from Veterans' perspective
- Test a concept that was based on findings from the gap analysis

Feature	MHV	VAOS	Other VA.gov
1. Display appointments list	●	●	-
1a. Display booked appointments	●	●	●
1b. Display status of appointments (completed, canceled, upcoming, etc.)	●	●	-
1c. Print appointments list	●	●	-
1d. Downloadable Appointments User guide	●	●	-
1e. Online Learn More Appointments Information	●	●	-
2. Display single appointment details	●	●	-
2a. Print single appointment details	●	●	-
3. Display and find the location of the VA facility for appointments	●	●	●
3a. Access the online scheduling tool through a forwarding link	●	n/a	●
4. View VA appointments on the Health Calendar	●	●	-
4a. Add non-VA appointments to the Health Calendar	●	●	-
5. Request an appointment through Secure Messaging	●	●	flagship app
5a. Request information about an appointment through SM	●	●	flagship app
6. Download appointments data through Blue Button	●	●	-
6a. Download past appointments information through Blue Button (limited to past 2 years)	●	●	-
6b. Download future appointments	●	●	-
7. Set up email reminders for upcoming VA appointments	●	●	●

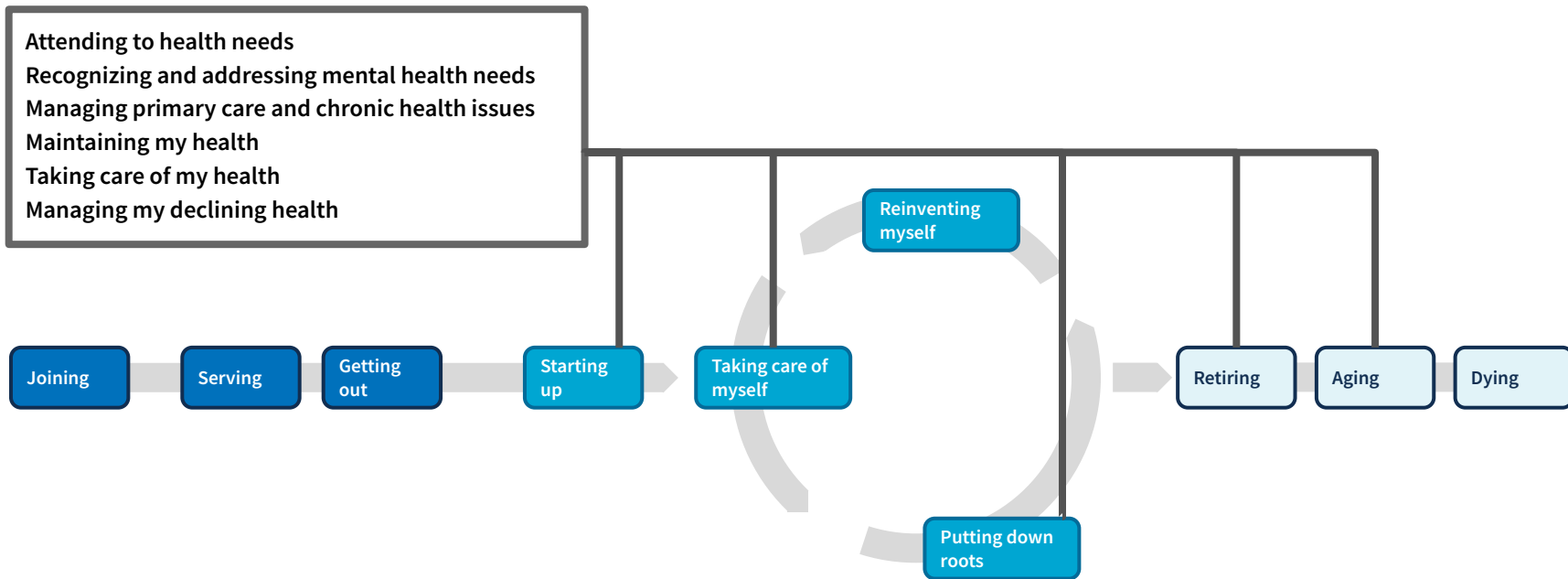
VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# How this research maps to the Veteran journey

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022



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



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# OCTO-DE goals that this research supports

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

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 successfully 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

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

# Participant Demographics

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

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

- Cognitive Disability
- Other than honorable
- Expat
- LGBTQ+
- Assistive Tech users

We recommend studies with these underserved groups in the future.

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery																	
# of participants		9		# of AT users							0	# of no shows					3
Category	%	Target	Study	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
<b>Veterans</b>																	
Based on current VA statistics																	
<a href="#">Age 55-64+</a>	50.00%	5	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	
<a href="#">Cognitive Disability</a>	50.00%	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<a href="#">Mobile user</a>	50.00%	5	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	
<a href="#">Rural</a>	25.00%	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	
<a href="#">No degree</a>	25.00%	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
<a href="#">Other than honorable</a>	21.00%	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<a href="#">Immigrant origin</a>	17.00%	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<a href="#">Women</a>	10.00%	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	
<a href="#">Expat (living abroad)</a>	0.40%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Race</b>																	
Based on VA's projected statistics																	
Black	15.00%	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	
Hispanic	12.00%	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Biracial	3.90%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Asian	3.00%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Native	0.30%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>LGBTQ+</b>																	
LGBTQ+ Veterans are 5 times as likely to have PTSD																	
Gay, lesbian, or bisexual	--%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Transgender	--%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Nonbinary, gender fluid, ge	--%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

[Participant Tracker on Google Sheets](#)

# Hypothesis

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

Veterans largely use the MyHealtheVet appointments list to look at their health care appointments. **We believe that they may be confused by content and interactions that are different between the two lists** when use VAOS to do the same tasks.



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# How we tested

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

We asked participants to log into MHV and VA.gov and provide feedback on the two lists. Then we asked them to respond to a concept for a redesign of this list that would appear on VA.gov.

Schedule or Cancel a VA Appointment			
VA Appointments Summary (Telephone, Video, In-Person)			
Select an item to view details.			
Appointment Date/Time	Status	Clinic Name	Medical Center Division
2021 Nov 19 @ 14:00 PST	Canceled	Vancouver Prosthetics O&P 2 Also Called: VAN PROS O&P 2	Portland VA Medical Center
2021 Sep 30 @ 11:45 PDT	Canceled	HILLSBORO PRIMARY CARE GANAPATHY Also Called: HIL PACT PLATINUM	Hillsboro VA Clinic
2021 Jul 09 @ 12:00 PDT	Completed	COVID-19 DRIVE THROUGH TESTING Also Called: POR COVID NURSE P1	Portland VA Medical Center
2021 Jul 09 @ 09:00 PDT	Completed	Vancouver VA Covid Testing Also Called: VAN COVID NURSE BLDG 20	Portland VA Medical Center
2021 Feb 27 @ 12:00 PST	Canceled	SALEM NUTRITION HOME VIDEO VISIT Also Called: SAL VVC NUTRITION	Portland VA Medical Center
2021 Feb 27 @ 10:00 PST	Canceled	SAL NUTRITION	Portland VA Medical Center
2021 Feb 25 @ 10:00 PST	Canceled	SAL NUTRITION	Portland VA Medical Center
2021 Feb 19 @ 10:00 PST	Canceled	VIRTUAL NUTR GRP Also Called: WES VVC MOVE GP	Portland VA Medical Center
2021 Feb 18 @ 15:00 PST	Canceled	virtual nutrition class Also Called: BEN VVC MOVE GP	Portland VA Medical Center
2021 Feb 13 @ 11:00 PST	Canceled	SALEM NUTRITION HOME VIDEO VISIT Also Called: SAL VVC NUTRITION	Portland VA Medical Center

Showing 1 to 10 of 27 entries

## Your appointments

Start scheduling

Pending (3) Past

### November 2022

Wednesday, November 25

10:00 a.m. ET  
Pittsburgh VA Medical Center

[Details >](#)

CANCELED

Wednesday, November 25

10:00 a.m. ET  
Pittsburgh VA Medical Center

[Details >](#)

Wednesday, November 25

10:00 a.m. ET  
Pittsburgh VA Medical Center

[Details >](#)

## Your appointments

Start scheduling

Pending (3) Past

### January 2022

Mon  
17

10:00 a.m. ET  
VA Video Connect

Pittsburgh VA Medical Center  
LOM ACC PM&R KT

[Details >](#)

Fri  
21

10:00 a.m. ET  
Phone Visit

Pittsburgh VA Medical Center  
LOM ACC PM&R KT

CANCELED

[Details >](#)

10:00 a.m. ET  
Office Visit

Pittsburgh VA Medical Center  
LOM ACC PM&R KT

[Details >](#)

1:00 p.m. ET  
VA Video Connect

Pittsburgh VA Medical Center  
LOM ACC PM&R KT

[Details >](#)

2:00 p.m. ET  
Phone Visit

Pittsburgh VA Medical Center  
LOM ACC PM&R KT

[Details >](#)



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Hypothesis

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

*Veterans largely use the MyHealtheVet appointments list to look at their health care appointments. **We believe that they may be confused by content and interactions that are different between the two lists** when use VAOS to do the same tasks.*

## Likely true

- Participants were able to understand and use both lists
- But most participants were confused by:
  - Two sites with separate logins to view/manage appointments
  - Clinic names

"When you mix military and medical jargon you get something wacky."



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



What's confusing?

---

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

6/9 participants said the **most confusing** aspect of everything we showed them **was that they had to log into two different sites to do the same thing.**

*Why would I go through the whole process of navigating [to VAOS] if [MHV] has everything I need?" - P12*

*"The log-in process is frustrating because you are already logged into MHV and when you need to schedule an appointment why would I need to log in again?" - P10*

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## 7/9 participants found the clinic names confusing.

4 wanted to see the name of the clinic used at the facility to check-in.

A well-named clinic would help them:

- Understand what the appointment is for.
- Differentiate their appointments.
- Find their way at the facility.

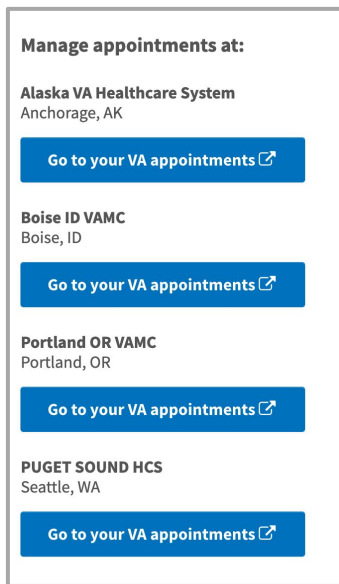
Clinic Friendly Name	Clinic Name
DC/MH CARE SELF SCHEDULE	DC/MH CARE SELF SCHEDULE
SW DE SANTIAGO IND	MH - SW DE SANTIAGO IND
PHD WELSH	MH - PHD WELSH
EVANSTON - MH SW MANGAT IND	EVANSTON - MH SW MANGAT IND
	PHL BH KLECZE CLC FOL F2F
LA JOLLA COVID VACCINE	LJ COVID VACCINE AM
BILOXI OPTOMETRY BOURGEOIS CLINIC	OPTOMETRY BIL BOURG.
UNIV DRIVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WALK-IN NURSE TRIAGE	PIT-UB-BHIP W/I-RN-X
PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER	SEA PACT OLYMPICS ACUTE
PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER	SEA PACT OLYMPICS 10 PROV
SPT PEER SUPPORT	TPA MH SPT PEER SUPPORT
TPA MENTAL HEALTH SELF-SCHEDULING CLINIC	TPA MH SELF SCH

Examples of actual clinic names shown to Veterans (September 2021)

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

Some participants were confused **to see unfamiliar facilities when navigating from MHV to VAOS.**



**Manage appointments at:**

**Alaska VA Healthcare System**  
Anchorage, AK

[Go to your VA appointments](#)

**Boise ID VAMC**  
Boise, ID

[Go to your VA appointments](#)

**Portland OR VAMC**  
Portland, OR

[Go to your VA appointments](#)

**PUGET SOUND HCS**  
Seattle, WA

[Go to your VA appointments](#)

(The VAOS and the Profile teams previously [researched this issue.](#))

*"I wish they would remove the old clinics that I no longer go to off this list." - P5*

*"I am not sure why [Facility name] is on there; that is 4 hours away." - P12*

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## Some participants were confused to see unfamiliar facilities when navigating from MHV to VAOS (continued).

- VAOS has a similar list.
- This may cause confusion (not confirmed through this research).

### Your VA health care team may be using our new My VA Health portal

Our records show that you're registered at:

**Mann-Grandstaff Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center** (Now using My VA Health)

Please choose a health management portal below, depending on your provider's facility. You may need to disable your browser's pop-up blocker to open the portal. If you're prompted to sign in again, use the same account you used to sign in on VA.gov.

#### Manage appointments at:

**Mann-Grandstaff Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center**

[Go to My VA Health](#)

#### Another VA health facility

[Go to the VA appointments tool](#)

What's useful?

---

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## **Participants wanted to easily differentiate appointments.**

Aside from date and time participants would have been helped by:

- 7/9 Type of care
- 4/9 Clinic name - as it is called at the VA facility
- 2/9 Whether the appointment was for, or connected to, labs

*"I would want to know what type of appointment it is right up front." - P5*

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

**Participants wanted to easily understand how and where they would attend their appointments.**

9/9 wanted to see clear “modality” information - whether it was in person, over the phone, or via telehealth.

*> [Notices MHV detail says appt is for In-person, Telehealth, or Phone] - "That's confusing. Is it all three?" - P2*

*>"If anything, it is not very clear on where it took place. Like in-person or a phone call." - P11*



# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## **Participants wanted to easily understand how and where they would attend their appointments (continued).**

Helpful info for in-person appointments:

- 6/9 Provider name\*
- 4/9 Clinic name - as it is called at the VA facility\*
- 4/9 Medical center or facility name
- 3/9 Floor number
- 3/9 Room number

[Other studies](#) showed similar findings.

\* Provider and clinic names can also indicate what an appointment is for.

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## Participants wanted tools to help them contact their provider.

- 3/9 participants said they send their provider a secure message after viewing appointments in MHV.
- 5/9 said the direct extension to the clinic would be helpful to avoid navigating the call center phone tree.

*"I would like it if you could secure message your provider from this list. Just being able to send a message to your provider based on this appointment, or their clerk to see if there is any more information I may need for the upcoming appointment would be helpful." - P10*

# Concept test

---

# Your appointments

Start scheduling

[Pending \(3\)](#) [Past](#)

## January 2022

Mon 17	10:00 a.m. ET VA Video Connect	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT	<a href="#">Details</a> >
-----------	-----------------------------------	---	---------------------------

Fri 21	10:00 a.m. ET Phone Visit	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT	CANCELED <a href="#">Details</a> >
-----------	------------------------------	---	------------------------------------

10:00 a.m. ET Office Visit	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT	<a href="#">Details</a> >
-------------------------------	---	---------------------------

1:00 p.m. ET VA Video Connect	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT	<a href="#">Details</a> >
----------------------------------	---	---------------------------

2:00 p.m. ET Phone Visit	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT	<a href="#">Details</a> >
-----------------------------	---	---------------------------

## February 2022

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

**Almost all participants responded positively to the proposed concept.**

8/9 participants had a strongly positive first impressions of the concept.

Most appealing:

- Modality
- Information layout
- Minimal content

*"First thing I see are the icons to connect by video, phone, office visit. I like the fact that the icons jump right out at you." - P1*

*"This looks great, a grid, like the MyHealtheVet list" - P5*

*"Dates are easy to scan, like on the 21st we have potentially four appts" - P3*

# Key findings

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## **4/9 participants found the word "pending" confusing in the concept.**

This may have been an issue because:

- Participants weren't familiar with requests.
- The dates shown were confusing.

We've explored confusion around requests in [other studies](#).

*"Pending - what does pending mean?" - P2*

*"I am not sure what pending could be, unless it is an appointment you have tried to make and you are waiting for the clerk to approve your appointment." - P10*

# Additional insights

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

**5/9 participants said they don't use the appointment list in MHV often.**

No participant indicated that they used the list on a daily or weekly basis.

Some uses they noted:

- 5/9: Verify appointments are properly scheduled by VA
- 3/9: Check for upcoming appointments
- 2/9: Check against their personal calendar
- 2/9: Use past appointments to plan for annual appointments



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Recommendations

---



# Recommendations

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

Provide clear information that answers basic questions about appointments in the list.

When is it?	What's it for?	How will I attend?	Where will I attend?	Has it been canceled?
Date, time, timezone, weekday	Type of care	Modality	Check-in clinic name*	Cancellation indicator
	If labs are needed		Medical center or facility name	
			Building name or number, room number	
			Provider name*	

\* Provider name and check-in clinic name can also help Veteran names understand what the appointment is for

# Recommendations

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

Provide clear information that answers basic questions about appointments in the list.

When is it?	What's it for?	How will I attend?	Where will I attend?	Has it been canceled?
Date, time, timezone, weekday	Type of care	Modality	Check-in clinic name	Cancellation indicator
	If labs are needed		Medical center or facility name	
			Building name or number, room number	
			Provider name	

Whether data is available:



Available for all appointments



Sometimes available



Not available

# Recommendations

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## Build on the proposed concept.

- Participants responded positively to the new concept
- Clear modality information had the highest value
- Review “pending” vs “requested” language
- Don’t include clinic name/code

### January 2022

Mon 17	10:00 a.m. ET VA Video Connect	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT		<a href="#">Details &gt;</a>
Fri 21	10:00 a.m. ET Phone Visit	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT	CANCELED	<a href="#">Details &gt;</a>
	10:00 a.m. ET Office Visit	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT		<a href="#">Details &gt;</a>
	1:00 p.m. ET VA Video Connect	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT		<a href="#">Details &gt;</a>
	2:00 p.m. ET Phone Visit	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center LOM ACC PM&R KT		<a href="#">Details &gt;</a>

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Recommendations

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## Advocate for clear clinic names.

Talk to facility staff to learn:

- Value in using these codes internally
- If better data sources are available

Patient Friendly Clinic Name	Clinic Name
DC/MH CARE SELF SCHEDULE	DC/MH CARE SELF SCHEDULE
SW DE SANTIAGO IND	MH - SW DE SANTIAGO IND
PHD WELSH	MH - PHD WELSH
EVANSTON - MH SW MANGAT IND	EVANSTON - MH SW MANGAT IND
	PHL BH KLECZE CLC FOL F2F
LA JOLLA COVID VACCINE	LJ COVID VACCINE AM
BILOXI OPTOMETRY BOURGEOIS CLINIC	OPTOMETRY BIL BOURG.
UNIV DRIVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WALK-IN NURSE TRIAGE	PIT-UB-BHIP W/I-RN-X
PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER	SEA PACT OLYMPICS ACUTE
PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER	SEA PACT OLYMPICS 10 PROV
SPT PEER SUPPORT	TPA MH SPT PEER SUPPORT
TPA MENTAL HEALTH SELF-SCHEDULING CLINIC	TPA MH SELF SCH

Examples of actual clinic names shown to Veterans (September 2021)

# Recommendations

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## Review the similar Cerner offboarding interactions in MHV and VAOS.

- Move this feature fully to VAOS.
- Simplify the language and interaction shown in VAOS.
- Consider showing a personalized set of facilities as discussed in previous research.

Cerner offboarding on MHV

**Schedule or Cancel a VA Appointment Online**

Manage appointments at:

Alaska VA Healthcare System  
Anchorage, AK

[Go to your VA appointments](#)

Boise ID VAMC  
Boise, ID

[Go to your VA appointments](#)

Portland OR VAMC  
Portland, OR

[Go to your VA appointments](#)

PUGET SOUND HCS  
Seattle, WA

[Go to your VA appointments](#)

Cerner offboarding on VAOS

**⚠ Your VA health care team may be using our new My VA Health portal**

Our records show that you're registered at:

Mann-Grandstaff Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (Now using My VA Health)

Please choose a health management portal below, depending on your provider's facility. You may need to disable your browser's pop-up blocker to open the portal. If you're prompted to sign in again, use the same account you used to sign in on VA.gov.

Manage appointments at:

Mann-Grandstaff Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center

[Go to My VA Health](#)

Another VA health facility

[Go to the VA appointments tool](#)



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Recommendations

VAOS and MHV appointments list discovery | 2/2022

## **Consider providing a path to Secure Messenger from the appointment list.**

- Allow Veterans to start a secure message to provider or facility from an appointment.
- Include appointment information in message.



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Questions?

---