# Conversation Guide: Harassment Reporting Landing Page & Poster

## Warm-up Questions - 5-15 minutes (depending on whether show poster)

NOTE how to share URL: dictate / Zoom chat / email / text

Let’s start with a question...

I'd like you to imagine that you or a friend went to a VA medical clinic today for a doctor's appointment, and on the way in, a person said something rude and made a sexual gesture that made you or your friend feel uncomfortable. You or your friend think more about what happened and decide to report it to hopefully prevent it from happening to other people. What do you think you or your friend would do?

* (don't / report it / talk with someone/police at VA / call 911 / google)  
  ***- “Tell the guy to \*\*\*\* himself. I would go report it to somebody. I’ve reported in the past and nothing was done so I would just go on with my day.”  
  Has reported something like this before and didn’t have anything happen as a result.***
* Can you tell me more about why?
* What do you think you or your friend would do next?
  + (Google / Facebook / MHV / eBenefits / Contact center call or email / VA.gov / In person / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

### For sighted participants

Say that while you were at VA, you saw a poster about reporting harassment, but you're no longer there. How would you find information about reporting harassment now?

What information would you look up online?

* (ask someone / google it? / VA.gov? / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)  
  **- “Probably contact patient advocate and find out what can be done. Sometimes we don’t know who the person is, and we can’t give a name. I can’t report it because I don’t know who it was. They would say ‘we don’t know who it is so we can’t do anything about it’” – VA has said this to her before.  
  - Guy next to her at the VA was blaring music on his phone and participant is deaf in one ear, which was bothering her, and asked him to turn the music down. He used profanity and yelled at her. She went to the cops and did not get a positive outcome/response. She reported it to the VA, and nothing happened. Was told ‘we will get back to you’ and they didn’t. Reported through the patient advocate (new one she had never met). She has a usual patient advocate she likes going to. Was told there would be an investigation and never heard anything back.  
  - “I hope this helps but there is such a core belief in the military and what it means. It's better than when I got out. When I got out, I avoided the VA for 17 years because I couldn’t stand the harassment.”  
  - It is better now for her. “They now recognize harassment does exist. It’s usually other women that help.”**  
  **- Has heard of other VA’s that treat women better (different entrance, assigned case manager, etc.) Does not feel that her VA cares or listens.   
  - “I used to have such hope it would be different. Don’t expect anything from the VA, you will just be disappointed.”**

### For sighted participants on desktop

Now I'd like to show you a poster and get your feedback on it. (share my screen with poster and give mouse control to participant so they can move around)

* What are your initial impressions?   
  ***- “It’s very wordy. It’s a lot of words and it feels like one more announcement the VA has hung up. If I was ever looking for what to do, this is perfect for that.”***
* (Note especially any sentiments/feelings they express re safety, comfort, trust, confidentiality)  
  **- Doesn’t seem much different than others she has seen. “It has a phone number to call which is new.”   
  - “Given my history, I don’t have much hope. It’s a number I would try calling if I needed to.”**
* (Pause to allow as much time as the participant wants to read/process the poster)
* What do you think you or your friend would do next if you wanted to report the interaction I described earlier--a person said something rude to you and made a sexual gesture that made you feel uncomfortable?   
  ***- “I would call the patient advocate or the phone number. I wouldn’t contact a cop because they are the ones that have said to me before ‘What do you want us to do about it?’”  
  - Would be more likely to contact the patient advocate she likes and has used in the past. Has talked with her before. “I talked to her with a big issue I didn’t know I could trust her with.” PTSD director did something “unacceptable” to participant. Was able to trust patient advocate after telling her story. Didn’t report. “It requires a lot of extra effort to bring things to people’s attention. It makes it that much harder.”***
* Which number would you call?
* If you were still at the facility, how would you decide how to report it?
  + (call 911 / call 800 # / talk to patient advocate / police / building security / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)
* What other thoughts do you have about this poster?

### For participants using a screen reader

Say that while you were at VA, someone mentioned that you could report harassment, but you're no longer there. How would you find information about reporting harassment now?

* (ask someone / google it? / VA.gov? / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

What assistive technology are you using today?

How would you rate your level of experience with using a screen reader--beginner, intermediate, advanced, or expert?

How long have you been using a screen reader?

Are you wearing headphones today? I'm asking so I will be able to hear your screen reader during the session.

* **(if on desktop)** Could you please share your audio with me on Zoom?
* **(if on mobile)** Would it be possible for you to take them off and use your computer or mobile audio?

## Start screen sharing

Are you OK continuing with the session? We can take a break if you want to.

I'm going to share with you a web page. While you're looking at it, I would like you to talk aloud as much as possible so that you share what you're thinking, what you're doing, what you like, what you dislike, and what you're unsure about.

I would like you to share your screen with me so I can watch you use the web page in your web browser. (refer to Screen sharing instructions above, if needed)

What kind of device are you using today? (Phone / Computer)

I'm going to (spell/put into the Zoom chat) a link for you to open (<https://staging.va.gov/hrt>). (If asked, reassure that this is a legitimate link to what I want you to test.)

Do you see the link?

## Veteran Tasks

### Task 1: [Explore landing page] - 15 minutes

**(for everyone)** Let's say that you found this page on VA.gov.

* What are your initial impressions of this page?  
  ***- “I don’t think I’ve ever seen all of this information in one spot. It’s a lot of good information.”  
  - “Honestly, it feels like nice try but we’ve seen this stuff before.” Similar messages to what she’s heard already. Skeptical that anything would be different.***
* (Note especially any sentiments/feelings they express re safety, comfort, trust, confidentiality)  
  ***- “Tell me what is being done? What is being done so I know this won’t happen again?” Wants to see more therapist hired, Veteran who was reported won’t be allowed back to the VA anymore, etc. Looking for information on changed policies, staffing, and belief in the program. “They don’t believe what they are selling.” Not getting a sense of any of these things from the webpage.***   
  ***- “Seems more transparent than it has in the past.” Likes the questions at the bottom – hasn’t seen these before.   
  - “I still hold out hope the VA will get better.” Might call the number but would try it as a test – wouldn’t have much hope.***
* (Pause to allow as much time as the participant wants to read/process the page)

What do you think you or your friend would do next if they wanted to report the interaction I described earlier--a person said something rude and made a sexual gesture that made you or your friend feel uncomfortable?

* (call 911 / call VA police / call 800 # / in person / call at a VA health facility / Vet Center / regional office / national cemetery / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)  
  ***-*** ***Would try the 800 #.   
  - Thoughts on phone hours: “That’s not a huge amount of time and right in the middle or work hours.” Later at night or lunch time hours would be convenient for her. Doesn’t want to call during work because coworkers could overhear.***

What do you think will happen next?

* ***“Either something gets done or it’s dropped.” Feels more confident that the webpage says they will review all cases within 1 business day, however, “It’s what I’ve heard before.” Doesn’t seem all that different to her.***

What other thoughts do you have about this page?

* Feedback on the information in it?  
  ***- “For a VA webpage, it’s not bad. It’s not terribly boring.”  
  - Would like to see factual examples/events and things happening at the VA to change. Example: “A stand down for sexual harassment or having the women parts of the VA safer (own entrance).”  
  - One time wasn’t provided a gyno gown during appt at the VA. “Stuff like that feels really humiliating.”   
  - Really wants to see actions.   
  - “You can get a feel for organizations and a desire to change. That’s what I feel like should happen with the VA.”   
  - Participant’s photo was selected for “I am not invisible” campaign and was not told by the VA. “That would have been a perfect opportunity for them to do something to recognize women, but they ruined it.”***
* Feedback on how the information is organized?

## Post-Task Interview - 15 minutes

Type into #feedback-backchannel: "Any questions you want me to ask?"

What thoughts do you have about what you've reviewed today?

* What was helpful about what you've reviewed today?
* What was not helpful about what you've reviewed today?
* What would you like to change about what you've reviewed today?

We would like the harassment reporting resources to meet the needs of ALL Veterans who may have been harassed at a VA site. If you've ever experienced any type of harassment at VA, and are willing to share, we would like to know a little more about your experiences. I'm not asking for details, and I don't want you to re-live these difficult experiences. Your feedback today has been valuable, even if you decide to not answer the questions I'm about to ask. If you share anything about your experiences or someone else's with me, what you say will remain confidential. Are you comfortable if I ask a few more questions?

* Have you or anyone you know ever been made to feel uncomfortable by someone else at VA while applying for, using, or communicating about your VA benefits or health care? This could be in person, over the phone, or in an email or text message. And it could be a range of things, like someone whistling or making sexual comments, making negative comments about gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, giving unwanted attention, or making inappropriate gestures. You don't need to share any details, you can stop at any time, or you could skip this question. (yes / no / decline to answer)
* If you or your friend was harassed, was it reported? (no / yes)
* If so, how was it reported? (phone call / in person / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)
* If it wasn't reported, what were the barriers to reporting it?

How would you prefer to report any future harassment? (phone call / in person / online somehow / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

(If they share anything about a harassment experience, say...)

* I am sorry you (or your friend) had this experience. We appreciate you sharing this with us. Your story will inform how we provide resources to help Veterans in the future.
* If you (or your friend) want to report your experience with harassment, that can be done in person at a VA site or by calling the VA Inspector General Hotline at 800-488-8244.

Is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you think I should know?

## Thank You and Closing - 5 minutes

We really appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts with us today. Your feedback is so helpful to us as we continue to work on providing resources for reporting harassment. We're hoping that by providing such resources, we can make VA safer for everyone.

I'm going to stop the recording now. (STOP recording)

Before we end this session, are there any questions or concerns that you wanted to express?

Thank you so much again!

(if this session didn't appear to trigger a traumatic response) And I hope you enjoy the rest of your day!