**Conversation Guide – Participant 2**

3/9/2022 – 2pm ET

[Prototype Link](https://www.sketch.com/s/908b453b-ef8b-4193-b955-ea00f9fd14aa/a/jgzLvgz/play?hotspots=false)

**Moderator logistics**

*Use*[*#feedback-backchannel*](https://dsva.slack.com/messages/C40B45NJK/details/)*in Slack for real-time feedback from observers.*

*Mute your Slack notifications*

*Before the session, send out the*[*observer instructions*](https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/platform/research/during-research/howto-observer-instructions.md)*to your observers (Slackbot will do this for you if you type "observer instructions" into*[*#feedback-backchannel*](https://dsva.slack.com/channels/feedback-backchannel)*).*

*In the Attendees section, make sure everyone except the participant is on mute.*

*In the Participant "more" menu, make sure "Play Join and Leave Sound" is unchecked*

*Check your [screensharing setup] and share permissions for participants.*

*When the participant is ready, begin the session with the following intro*

**Intro - 5 minutes**

Thanks for joining us today! My name is Lauryl and I also have some colleagues on the line observing and taking notes. Today we're going to show you some early ideas related to accessing and managing your VA healthcare online.

Before we start, a few things I want to mention:

* **This entire session should take about 1 hour.** I want to be sure not to keep you much longer, so I may occasionally prompt you with the next question or topic.
* **In this session, we want to hear your honest opinions.** We are not testing your ability. We just want to improve these tools to better meet Veteran's needs. I will not be offended by any opinions you express, and I welcome your feedback.
* **You'll be interacting with a Demo.** This is a demo and not a live website, parts may not function exactly the way you expect. Some areas of the prototype will be clickable, and some will not. Just let me know what you'd expect to happen in that case. Since it's a demo, none of your actions will affect your actual VA information or benefits.
* **If for any reason and at any time you want to stop the session, please let me know.**
* **Are you comfortable if I record my screen and audio as we talk today?** We use the recordings to confirm that we have captured your opinions accurately. The recordings are destroyed after we complete analysis, and none of your comments will be attributed to you directly.
  + If yes: **Once I start recording, I am going to confirm that you are ok with me recording this session once more.**

*Start recording.*

* **I have started recording**. I'd like to confirm: Are you comfortable if I record my screen and the audio as we talk today?

**Warm-up Questions - 5-10 minutes**

Participant is using a phone. Facilitator screen shared and “drove” the mouse with P2 saying where to go.

* Do you have healthcare through the VA? How do you manage your healthcare benefits? How would you like to manage your benefits?

Yes, has VA health care.

* Do you have other benefits through the VA? How do you manage your healthcare benefits? How would you like to manage your benefits?

**How interact with health care?**  
I use secure email function. I log in to VA.gov. I message my primary care, and he responds directly.

Couple times last year had to go to emergency room.

**What else you use website for?** Depends on what comes up for me medically. [P2 mentioned vaccination.]

* Have you used MyHealtheVet? If Yes, how often do you use it? What do you use it for? What would you change about MHV?

**What would you change about site?**   
Maybe live chat. Typically someone gets back to me in 24-48 hours. “I guess speed could be better.”

* Do you use secure messaging now? What for? How often? What would you change about it?

I use secure messaging maybe once every 2 months, depending on what I have going on. Maybe 8-12 times a year.

* [have participant open up a browser] You got an email from the VA that there's a new way to look at all your healthcare needs in one place, but you can't remember what it was called. How would you find it?[if needed, direct participant to open VA.gov homepage] Where would you expect to find it on VA.gov?

I would probably start on Google. Would probably then go to Reddit. I follow a couple of Veteran groups there. Or call VA directly.

**What words wd you use or ask them to use (when helping you)?**

* + Veterans’ health care
  + Veterans’ health groups
  + Veteran health program

**Health Apartment homepage, unauth - 5 minutes**

* What are you seeing here?

MHV homepage, with Pharmacy, Appts, Messages, Medical Records. There is a sign-in where you can sign in to your account.

P2 asked: This is the current page, right?

**What do you think?**   
 “I don’t know, they are always changing things.”

All this stuff is bookmarked on my computer.

Options look familiar, like when you log in on VA.gov. But I’m not sure.

**When would you expect to see this page?**   
Probably as soon as I sign in.

* (if they noticed MHV branding) What does that mean to you?
* What are you able to do on this page?

**What can you do from this page?**Typically I go to message function and navigate to my primary care. I check appts as well. Never really did anything with medical records, never ordered anything from Pharmacy.

* Now that you've seen this page, where would you expect to find it on the VA.gov website?
* Talk to me about the links that you're seeing on this page (dig into side nav if they bring it up)
* How would you sign in?

I would go to the bookmark on my computer, and my username and password are in my computer. I try to shortcut and save a lot of things because I don’t have the best memory.

I would go to the sign in button (the big one within the page). Guess I could sign in up top (in masthead). “I guess either one would be fine.”

* What do you think you'd see if you were to sign in? (have participant click thru login to auth'ed version of the page)

**Things to watch for:**

* Do they notice this is MHV branded?
* Do they expect to see something different if signed in or not?
* How do they expect to get to this page? How does it relate to the bigger VA.gov site?

**Health Apartment homepage, auth - 5 minutes**

* What's different about this page? What website is this?

I see:

* + Medications prescribed
  + Appointments
  + Communication with doctor
  + Some medical records updates

Looks like they populated the page with that person’s profile info.

* Where do you think the information you're seeing is coming from?

Not sure where the info is coming from. A database?  
  
**Scrolled to see rest of page…**   
Nothing standing out, specifically. “Looks like they are trying to provide as much info as they can on this one page.”

**What info are they providing?**   
Disability, info regarding health care and disability benefits.  
  
[Facilitator scrolled more, to bottom, and stopped at Contact and Health resources.]  
Seems like they are trying to provide info on lots of different things.

[He mentioned “lot of text.”]

Logically it makes sense. So we don’t have to call. Think it’s beneficial for Veterans.

[Scrolled up again…]  
“It’s a lot of information, in my opinion.” I don’t really see what could be added. You have prescriptions, appointments, ability to communicate with your medical provider. All those are important. Don’t see anything additional that’s needed.

* What are you able to do from this page?
* What is missing from this page? What information would be useful for you to see here?

See above.

* Medical Records: Let's say you needed to get a copy of your vaccine records, how would you do that from here? (before clicking) What would you expect to see here? Who's data would be here?
* Pharmacy: Let's say you needed to check on a prescription, how would you do that from here? (before clicking) What would you expect to see here?
* Messages: You want to send a message to your doctor, how would you do that from here? (before clicking) What would you expect to see here?

**How send your doctor a message?**This screen isn’t familiar to what I’m used to. I guess I’d click on the recipient of the messages, see if it provides email, direct contact to that person. Not really sure how to do that.

**If you click on Elizabeth (name of sender of message), what would you expect?**  
Typically a box pops up with my primary care. Either me or my son type a message. It will get to him somehow, and he will respond.  
  
**How see all unread messages?**   
No idea. Guess would go to view all messages.   
Expect list of all the messages I’ve sent and received.

* Appointments: You want to check all your upcoming appointments, how would you do that from here? (before clicking) What would you expect to see here?

**Things to watch for:**

* Do Veterans notice the info shown is now personalized?
* Are Veterans successfully able to complete the tasks?
* Does their understanding of what actions you can take on this page change once they see the logged in version?

**Medical Records - 5-10 minutes**

* What are you seeing here? What would you come here to do?

[Scrolled down, then back up.]

Seeing your labs. Guess your lab results would be under view test details. Would expect, I guess, the results of your blood work, different things they tested your blood for.

* Your doctor has asked you to record how much you walk these days, how would you do that from here?

Add and track your health info, on left (nav).

Would expect:

I don’t know, maybe the option to add info, maybe things about your diet, exercise. Maybe a memo pad where you can jot down what is relevant for the doctor.

* How would you check your most recent lab results?
* How would you see all your labs and tests?  
    
  **How see all labs and tests?**  
  Would they be under the Medical Records section?  
    
  **What do you think?**

It says “recent” (referring to top of Medical Records page), so – OK, go to the left corner (left navigation), click Labs and tests.

* You need to get a copy of all your VA medical records to take to a community care visit, how would you do that?

**How get copy of all your VA medical records?**

[P2 opted to scroll… ]

At bottom, there is manage your electronic record sharing options… You mean if I get it myself or ask someone else to?

Looks like you can only share with another provider… As far as getting it myself, I’m not 100% sure how to do that. “Hold on… What’s the ‘blue report’?”

**What do you expect?**  
Maybe a PDF of your record. Not really sure what happen if I got that [Blue Button].

* You had an Xray a few months ago and you want to check it out again, how would you do it?

Maybe medical images and reports, on the left (nav).

* What does Blue Button mean to you?

See above.

* Have you downloaded medical info from the VA (or other providers?) before? What was that experience like? Did you have any issues? How did you resolve them?

I have not downloaded my medical info – they sent a CD. I might have put a PDF on my computer.

* What is missing that you'd expect to see here?
* Let's say you needed to check on a prescription, how would you do that from here? (before clicking) What would you expect to see here?

**Things to watch for:**

* Does it make sense to have patient entered data on this page? Do Veterans find it useful?
* Do veterans understand the difference between Health Summary and Blue Button and why/when they would need them?
* Do they understand they are seeing recent stuff and not all, and how would they get to all?
* Are Veterans successfully able to complete the tasks?

**Pharmacy - 5-10 minutes**

P2: Looks like expiration date, type of prescription, and directions.

* What can you do from here?

Looks like you can add meds. Looks like if you are prescribed something not on this list, you can add it. Would expect it to show up in this list.

**Who would be able to see it?**I guess me and my doctor.   
  
**When would you add something to list?**   
I don’t know, I guess if you see someone outside the VA.

* Let’s say you needed to refill some prescriptions, how would you do that?

**If you got prescription by mail, where expect it sent to?**  
Place I’m living, I guess my home address.

* How would you receive this Rx? (If by mail) What address would you expect it go to?
* How many medications can you refill right now, based on what you see here?

**How many prescriptions can you refill now?**   
Looks like 2.

Think you would just click the refill button. Think then a message would go to your primary care to notify them of your request, and they would let you know if that was approved or not.

I usually go to VA pharmacy to refill prescriptions. The couple things I have had, I’ve physically gone to VA to get.

I’ve had only 2-3 medications. Couple years ago had a bad rash, went to emergency room. Pharmacy there gave me the prescription. Another time picked up prescription, was assigned from the doctor.

I know people who have VA deliver the prescription to their house. People who can’t walk.

* Why aren’t you able to refill some medications? What does Renew mean here? What would you expect to happen if you clicked that?

**What would happen if you contacted doctor to renew?**   
Not sure. Guess they would call you, see if it’s needed or not, then refill.

* You requested a refill a while back and want to get an update on when it’ll arrive. How would you do that?

Would start with track prescription. Would expect to see ETA, maybe certain date or time.   
  
**What does “in progress” mean to you?**  
Typically it means it’s being worked on, is not complete. Typically it means they are aware of the order, but it’s not ready for pickup.  
  
**If you had ?s, where would you go?**  
Probably start at FAQ.

* What other things can you do on this page? (If they notice Other Medication + Allergies/Reactions action links) Where do you expect that info to go? Who would be able to see that info? What are your thoughts on being able to add that info here?

You can ask for refills, contact your doctor to renew the prescription.

* What's missing from this page?

He paused… Um, I don’t know if you can request… I guess your prescription has to be authorized by the doctor, so it wouldn’t make sense to have request… The doctor would have to know.

“There’s a lot of info on this page… Looks fine to me.”

**How look at recent lab result from here?**

“I would go back.” “I would hit the back button.” Then go to view all in medical records.

Would expect:  
All labs, tests, recent things that have happened past few months, year, whatever.

* You want to check all your upcoming appointments, how would you do that from here? OR How would you get back to that first screen we saw?

**Things to watch for:**

* What would Veterans want to be able to do on this page but can't?
* Do Veterans understand the different types of actions (refill, track, renew, and view all Rx) they can do here? Does it makes sense to them to have that on one page?
* Are Veterans successfully able to complete the tasks?
* If the info listed on this page useful for Veterans?

**Appointments - 5-10 minutes**

This is what I’d expect. Looks like appts at different VA facilities.   
I have seen this before in my profile.

I have only looked to see date and time, have never tried to edit it.

I always make sure I have the date and time on my calendar.

* What can you do on this page?
* How would you get more information about your appointment on November 25?

I would see if the “November 25” is clickable (referring to the text). “You can’t click the date?” Would probably expect to be able to click that.

Would expect to see these things on the detail page:

* + Facility
  + Date
  + Time
  + Maybe the provider, depending on type of appointment
  + Just general info about the appointment
* How would you make an appointment with your doctor?

I have never done that. I have my kid help me with that. I have seen appointments that I have called for, that were scheduled for me, pop up here (on the website).

**How do you think you’d be able to schedule an appt?**   
Hesitated, then said would try the “Start scheduling” link.

Would expect to see:

I think I’ve seen that you could choose where you wanted the appointment to be, options like podiatry and primary care. I think a calendar would come up and you could pick your date and time.

Facilitator confirmed that he’d be expect to see the type of appointment: podiatrist, menu of different options you can choose.

* (Check-in link) You got an email and VA needs you to fill out some paperwork ahead of your upcoming doctor visit, how might you do that from here?

I don’t know. Um… Maybe go to the pre-check-in under the Appointments. I don’t know what that means, but I would click there.

**What would you expect?**   
Maybe see some important documentation. Don’t know.

* Let's say you wanted to sort the appointments you see here, how would you do that?
* What's missing from this page?

Seems the ability to schedule an appointment is not as apparent. Could make it “Book now.” “Book appointment here,” big button in middle of page.

**How would you check on a prescription from here?**

Think I would go back. Went to MHV main landing page. And I would go to view all in Pharmacy.

Expects to see “everything that I’m prescribed.”

* You want to send a message to your doctor, how would you do that from here? OR How would you get back to that first screen we saw?

**Things to watch for:**

* Do Veterans understand that the side navigation has additional tools related to Appointments?
* Are Veterans successfully able to complete the tasks?

**Messages - 5-10 minutes**

**What do you see here?**  
Looks like a list of all the messages.   
  
**How would you read a particular message?**   
Would probably click on the person’s name.   
Expect either message to open or box pops up that allows me to type an email to that person.

He asked to click on subject line of 1st message. “Looks clickable.”

* What can you do on this page?
* You remember that you had sent your doctor a message a few months ago with questions about covid testing. How would you find that message?

Hesitated a bit… I think in my messages, since I only communicate with him (referring to his primary care doctor), I would go back through the titles (subject lines). All the messages I have are only through my primary care.   
  
**Do you have email aside from secure messaging?**   
I have a Gmail I use every once in a while.   
  
**How find a message in your Gmail?**   
I guess I just scroll. I don’t check it that often, only have a few hundred emails in there. My son showed me how to use the search function. I have a lot of spam and other messages in there, so I don’t go to it that often.

[Note taker missed this question… ]

“I rely on my kids to walk me through a lot of stuff.”

I would probably use a message board.

Would use back button to go back to MHV main landing page. [Went to MHV main landing page.]

**How would you check upcoming appointments from here?**   
Would click on view all appts.

Would expect to see all upcoming appointments.

* You have a new message from your doctor about a recent test result, how would you look at it?
* You want to send your doctor a message about your upcoming appointment, how would you do that?

“I thought there was a way that I could click on his name, and it would just pop up. I’m not sure how to do that from this particular screen.”  
  
**If it’s a brand new doctor, you haven’t sent a message, so what would you do?**   
If I didn’t know him, then I would probably call the VA and see if I could get a message to him.

* Let's say you wanted to see messages just from the last 6 months, how would you do that?

I would probably scroll down to 6 months from now. Would probably just “best guess-timate” 6 months before.

**Would you want to do that (see messages from last 6 months)?**   
Guess it could be useful. I know people who do go back 6 months; I’m sure it would be helpful to them.

* What other ways would you expect to organize your messages?
* If you had questions about your messages, how would you find answers?
* How would you get back to that first screen we saw?

**Things to watch for:**

* Do Veterans understand this is the same functionality as MHV secure messaging?
* Are Veterans successfully able to complete the tasks?

**Post-Task Interview - 2 minutes**

* What are your thoughts about what we looked at today?

None, really.

* Any other things that would be good for us to know?

Outside of the ability to book an appointment, “book me” or a button that stands out, maybe a more streamlined approach to communicate with primary care doc.  
  
**On Messages page, what would that streamlined approach look like?**   
Maybe just have a… Notice the compose (button within page), maybe a directory where your medical record is held. Before I was assigned a primary care, I would just send my email to whoever… Maybe some sort of directory, “your primary care” or team.

**Thank-You and Closing - 2 minutes**

Well 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 the site and make sure it really works for Veterans.

Thanks! Lastly, do you know any other Veterans, caregivers, or service members who might be willing to participate in a future user research session? If Yes: Thank you! I'll have our team send you an email with a little blurb that you can pass along.

Great, well thank you so much again, and enjoy the rest of your day!