**Conversation Guide for a Board Appeal (NOD) Usability Study, March 2021**

**Intro - 5 minutes**

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? **Participant: “Yes.”**

**Warm-up Questions - 5 minutes**

Before we look at the website, let's start with a few warm-up questions.

* Can you tell me a little about yourself or your service history?
  + **Participant: “6 years in the Air Force. I had a medical discharge in 2015. I have a 70% rating.”**
* Have you used the VA.gov website before?
  + **Participant: “Yes.”**
* If yes, what was the last thing you were doing or looking for on the site?
  + **Participant: “The table of ratings is what I tried to look for last and it was frustrating because they don’t exist anymore.”**
* How was that experience?
* Have you ever tried to file a claim for a disability with the VA?
  + **Participant: “Most of my VA claims came through my separation. I had a rep help me through it. I had another one in 2016.”**
* If yes, how was that experience?
* Have you ever filed an appeal on a decision you received from the VA?
* If yes, how was that experience?
* Let’s take a look at the prototype now. Since this is a prototype, some buttons and features will work, some will not.

**Task 1: [Request a Board appeal]:**

Imagine that you have logged in to VA.gov and you have navigated to this page (Board Appeals Info page) because you disagree with a decision VA has made about one or more issues you have submitted a claim for.

Starting on this page, please walk me through how you would request a Board Appeal (also called Notice of disagreement). Please tell me what you see on each page, what you think the purpose of it is and what you would do on the page. (It is helpful if you think out loud, so I can follow what you are thinking, trying to do, and experiencing).

**Board Appeals info page**

* Take a look at this page and tell me what you see here, and what you would do on this page.
* What are your first impressions of this page?
  + **Participant: “Looks like a regular government webpage. ‘Can I request a Board appeal?’ Is good to have at the time. ‘Legacy appeals system’ might be confusing for older veterans. It would be good to have a definition somewhere. It’s pretty easy to follow.”**
* Is anything on this page unclear or confusing?
* Do you think any information is missing on this page?
  + **Participant: “If they can’t find a question in the FAQ’s, there should be a number to contact.”**

**Veteran detail pages**

* Is anything unclear or confusing on these pages?
  + **Participant: “It all makes sense. The language makes sense to me.”**
* Do you think any information is missing on this page?
* Any other comments?

**Issues eligible for review page**

* Tell me what you think the purpose of this page is and what you would do on this page.
* Is anything on this page unclear or confusing?
  + Participant: **“Previously it said, ‘Legacy appeals system’ and now it says ‘old appeals process.’ I think that the language needs to be consistent throughout.”**
* Do you understand what opting into the new appeals process means?
* Do you understand the consequences of this choice?
* Is there any information missing on this page?
* Any other comments?

Imagine that you see only half of the issues you have previously registered, on this page. What would you think and do?

Imagine now that you want to make a Board Appeal for 2 issues: let's say for Tinnitus and Arthritis (in your left ankle). Let's assume you have all the info and documents at hand to make a Board Appeal.

**Board review option page**

* What do you see on this page and what would you do here?
* Is anything on this page unclear or confusing?
  + **Participant: “No, looks good.”**
* Is there any information missing on this page?

Imagine that you have learned from your VSO (Veterans Service Organization) or attorney, that you need to submit new evidence, but that a hearing is not necessary. What would you do on this page?

**Additional evidence page**

* What do you see on this page and what would you do here?
  + **Participant: “I would want the VA to give information on how to send certified mail to make sure my information is safe.”**
* Is anything on this page unclear or confusing?
  + **Participant: “Some veterans may not know how to scan a copy of the document on their mobile phone. There should be some information on how to do this.”**
  + **Participant: “I would want to upload several documents at one time.”**
* Is there any information missing on this page?

Imagine you have one piece of evidence you want to submit. What would you do on this page?

**Review application page**

* Tell me what you think the purpose of this page is and what you would do here.
* Is anything on this page unclear or confusing?
  + **Participant: “Looks good to me.”**
* Are all the information you need on this page?
* Any other comments?

Imagine that you come to the page called Review Application. You review all the info on this page and notice that your old phone number is listed here. What would you do?

**Participant: “Click ‘Edit.’ And I would want to edit on this page and not go back.”**

**Post-Task Interview - 5-10 minutes**

* Having gone through the form, how was that experience?
* What was most unclear or confusing in the form?
* Was there any information that were missing?
  + **Participant: “All makes sense.”**
* What was most helpful in the form?
* What is one thing that could be improved in the form?
* Any other comments?
  + **Participant: “It is a lot of easier than other things I’ve done online. The veterans filling this out is going to be stressed so having this application so easy will be nice for them.”**
  + **Participant: “After I close my browser, how can I check the status of my claim at another time? Information about that would be helpful.”**
  + **Participant: “The most helpful part would be editing on the screen on the review page. A few wording issues could use more clarification for the older veterans.”**

**Thank-You and Closing - 2 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 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!