**Conversation Guide – Participant 13**

3/17/2022 – 11am 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**

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

Yes.

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

**How do you interact with your health care?**

In person, email, phone calls, whatever.

**How often?**

Depends, if I have issues or questions. Sometimes I contact them once a week, sometimes once a month, sometimes once a year.

Lately it’s been phone calls.

“I’m a 1-on-1 person. You can see peoples’ reactions, study their faces. It’s just more personal, I think.”

Though sometimes you can do things quickly, not in person. For example, email.

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

Yes.

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

I send email through My HealtheVet.

Usually go on once a week just to check things out.

Prescriptions, see if I have messages, “just being nosy.”

**What would you change about it?**

“Easier access. You have to kind of jump through hoops to get there. Like 3 or 4 steps.”

[He called MHV “Healthy Vet.”]

“Goes pretty good” once I get in. Pretty easy. Can contact primary care.

(RE: MHV:) “It’s a great site, by the way.”

Great to be able to contact your care team, get prescriptions. “It’s just easy.”

* [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?

If I could not find it through MHV, I’d make a phone call.

If you call the main office in [city name], you get too many repetitive things: you hear “If you need this,” if you need that, etc.

I know they need to have messages about “in crisis,” but…

I just want to get to the information. Just want “something I can bypass.”

**What words would describe what you are asking for?**

I would ask, if I was calling, try to find what I’m looking for… Or just say “ababdabab da…” They can’t understand you, so they connect you.

I would tell them I delete email by accident sometimes, ask for help.

Would be great to get a person on the phone right away. Maybe I could get the email address and get there myself.

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

* What are you seeing here?

Welcome to My HealtheVet, sign in, Pharmacy, Appointments, Messages, Medical Records, top tasks in health, pay copay bill, VA health care benefits, go to provider outside VA, get COVID booster, resources. [He also read parts of the footer, including contact.]

“I’m probably just on the VA site.” I type in My HealtheVet; that gets me to it right away.

I see several sign in options… You have to jump through hoops. Better if I can sign in here, get to it right away.

* (if they noticed MHV branding) What does that mean to you?
* What are you able to do on this page?
* Now that you've seen this page, where would you expect to find it on the VA.gov website?

When I usually go to the VA site, you have different options: DS Login, is it? I just go to click into My HealtheVet, then I get to this here, where I can do different things. Again, you have to jump through different hoops to get to where you want to go.

* 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 sign in, put in username and password, see Pharmacy, Appointments, Medical Records.

[He clicked the sign in block within the page.]

* 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**

“Welcome to MHV, Hector. I’m not Hector.”

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

“You can go right to different things. Pharmacy, all your appointments. Little different.”

I still see VA up top.

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

“I don’t where where it’s coming from. It’s coming from My HealtheVet, I would think.”

**You noticed it says VA up top… What does that mean?**

It’s part of VA, the Department of Veterans Affairs.

* 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?
* 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 would you send messages to your doctor?**

Moused over the “Messages” subhead, then the 1st message. I typically go right to my current provider.

**How would you see more messages?**

View all messages. [He clicked on that link.]

* 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?
* Your doctor has asked you to record how much you walk these days, how would you do that from here?
* How would you check your most recent lab results?
* How would you see all your 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?
* You had an Xray a few months ago and you want to check it out again, how would you do it?
* What does Blue Button mean to you?
* 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?
* 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**

* What can you do from here?
* Let’s say you needed to refill some prescriptions, how would you do that?
* 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?
* Why aren’t you able to refill some medications? What does Renew mean here? What would you expect to happen if you clicked that?
* You requested a refill a while back and want to get an update on when it’ll arrive. How would you do that?
* 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?
* What's missing from this page?
* 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**

It seems to only include current appointments. It should also include past appts.

[Looking at the Appointments page, he noticed dropdown, upcoming appointments.]

Past should have a spot – otherwise you get too much stuff on the page.  
There is a little arrow thing box there that will probably have all the appointments you have, including past.

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

I would click Details (on 1st appointment in list).

I’d want to see why I’m going, time, location, doctor I am seeing.

It should remind me I’m going for blood testing, or whatever. I can verify that’s correct.

Want to see why you’re going.

* How would you make an appointment with your doctor?

You would go to your messages. [Mousing over body of page…] There should be something in here.

[Then he went up and said maybe it’s the little link that says “Start scheduling.”]   
Maybe it would be better to say “make new appointment” for some people who would go that extra step.   
I would go there, probably to Start scheduling, then I need to see so and so, and blah blah blah.

**What does pre-check-in mean to you?**

Because of COVID, they are doing pre-checks. Want to see your history, make sure you are not sick when you come in.

It means 2 things:

* + Let someone else know that you know you have an appointment and you plan on being there.
  + “It’s a little tool to make sure you know things are going smoothly.”

**How do you check on prescriptions from here?**

Only way I see of doing that is going to Medical Records.

I don’t even know what my medical records are, so to me, I just want to do a prescription.

[Went to footer…] I’m seeing if there’s any place where you can check on… It’s not there, so I would have to go back past Appointments, go back to the main page of My HealtheVet and click on Prescriptions or Pharmacy.

**Is there another way?**

You could go to Home, I think. I don’t know if My Health would get you there.

**Where do you think “My Health” would take you?**

It would probably take me to past records, maybe this is about how you’re doing, I’m not sure.

[Facilitator: Go ahead and click on My Health.]  
[He clicked on it.]

**Where would “Home” take you?**

It should take me here, but “My Health” did the same thing.

Nice that I can go to Pharmacy from here. “1-stop shopping.”

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

You can compose a new message.   
Search for a message, I would not know how to do.

I see “Show messages by.”

Kind of cool that you can click on different names.

If I sent a message to a certain cardiologist, I would go find the name – if I remembered it – then look for the date, if I remembered it. “I would find out that person or that date, and then I could reply or ask them a question.”

You have to have some memory of talking to the person, looking at my calendar… I talked on such and such a date.

I’m “old school.” I don’t use phones.

* 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?
* 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?

Depends if it’s listed on appointments. I have never had to check that. Then if you go to Appointments, you could check there to see the date, then say you can’t make that appointment.

Text messages are a great reminder in case you forget to put your appointment on your calendar or phone.

[Right now his mouse is over the first message.]

If someone has a landline or doesn’t have the capability, I am guessing they are sent a message saying they have an appointment.

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

**How would you see the last message?**You have to go to “my recent” or “most recent” to see.   
I don’t know what that shows, what period of time.

**What “Show by” options do you want?**   
- Last month  
- Last 6 months   
- Last 3 months   
- Whatever somebody wants to set it up as.

If I want to see more, I’d click see all.   
Then how do you determine how far back you go? A year? 2 years? “That’s something that’s just got to be figured out.”

For me, I’d need to go back 2 years. [He referred to having surgery then.]

Say you set it as 2 years, how do I find out, somehow, 3 years ago.   
I realize you area taking care of lot of guys. “I don’t know how much you want to clunk up the system.”

**How would you do a new message?**I would click compose (within page – he moused over it).

I would look to see if someone wants to get ahold of me.   
You need to do your due diligence.

If I were to click on search messages… I go to MHV, see something that says you have a new message, I click on that message. If I want to refresh my memory, I would go to see my messages, or most recent messages. There is a place I can go to read my messages.

**How would you read these messages?**You just go on there and click on it. You see messages from Nurse Jones.

**How would you read a new message? What would you click on?**He moused over the 3rd unread one in list. I would click on the… [He moused over subject line.] I can see that they responded.

[He described a thread of corresponding with VA…]  
It could be a medical thing. Or maybe you can’t make this appointment. Here are some times... Maybe they say what time and date is good for you. Hopefully they respond in a timely manner.

**Where would you find answers if you need help?**   
Hopefully in the site there’s a thing that says I’m having this issue, a help or whatever. Sometimes you see these generic things. Hope I can get in touch with someone who can help me. “I just want some help.”

**Do you see a spot on this page that would help you get answers?**[He scrolled down.] “Not unless I go to ‘Next.’ “ [He is referring to the pagination.] “No, there’s no help.”

[He read the footer, mentioned “contact us.]” Maybe that would help. Then you have to put in your question, and do you get generic things?

Who do I get and how are they going to help me? Are they going to give me the information I need, or “do I have to jump through 14 and 11 hoops to get to where I want to go,” and then they give me to someone else.

**How would you get back to 1st page we saw?**The back arrow. [He clicked it and went to the MHV main landing page.]

**How would you check on upcoming appointments?**   
I’d click on appointments.   
“That part doesn’t click.” [Think he clicked on an individual appointment.]

**What if you want to see all your appointments?**Click on view all in appointments.

* 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?

“Room for improvement.”

Like we talked before, so you don’t have to jump through hoops.

“To me, this is everything I need right here, on 1 page: Pharmacy, Appointments, Medical Records, Messages. Clean and neat. Done.”

[He made some comments that were hard to understand… He seemed to be ruminating on where this would live with regard to VA.gov and My HealtheVet.]

“To me, I just need to get to My HealtheVet.”

**What do you think the goal of what you’ve seen today is? Who are we trying to reach?**

“Trying to reach the most people, the easiest way possible.”

“To me, this right here now is perfect for me. It might. It might not be for somebody else.”

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

**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!