**Health Hub Moderated Tree Tests: Conversation Guide**

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

## **Warm-up**

Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? (If stuck ask about location, occupation, military service history) I signed my first contract when I just turned 18yrs old. I got a degree in 1998, I got commissioned within the Active Reserve. My employer fired me due to my Reserve time. I got my MBA and got an invite to get my PhD, and made a second career change into Academics, and now I am a Professor at Penn State.

## **Interview**

**MODERATOR:** To start, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your usage of VA benefits and digital services.

Are you currently enrolled in the VA healthcare system and use any of those benefits? No. I did go to the VA for some hearing test after I left the service due to weapon training, but it was minimal, so my rating was low.

**A. [IF NO]** Where do you get your healthcare from? Private PCP.

Have you previously used any of the digital tools or services on the va.gov website? No, I have not.

**A. [IF YES]** Could you tell me an example or two of the things you've done on the website, and what your experience has been? I have advised students how to get involved in the VA to seek help and mental health through the VA.

**B. [IF NO]** How do you prefer to interact with the VA, if not on the website?

Part of what we'll be focusing on today is how you get and manage healthcare from the VA, and how we might improve that. Are you familiar with MyHealtheVet?

**A. [IF YES]** Tell me about some of the things that you've used it for. Was it easy to navigate?

## **Transition to Tree Test**

**MODERATOR:** Our team has been tasked with thinking through how we might best integrate MyHealtheVet into the VA.gov website and improve the navigation experience for those trying to get and manage their healthcare. In a moment I'll bring up a demo tool to show you what that navigation menu might look like and ask you to complete a few tasks. We'll go over it together to get your feedback. Does that sound good?

**MODERATOR:** As I mentioned, you'll be interacting with a demo tool. It will not look the site that you may be used to interacting with, but will mimic the information topics that you might click to navigate to pages from the top menu. This tool will mimic the top navigation of VA.gov. iIt's still a work in progress, there might be a few mistake or it may not function exactly the way you expect. That's okay! Since it's a demo, none of your actions will affect your actual VA information or benefits.

**MODERATOR:** As part of this study, you’ll be asked to complete certain tasks on screen. As you attempt to complete these tasks, I’m going to ask that you try something called "thinking aloud.” I want you to try narrating what you see in front of you and what you might do. An example I like to give, is if someone gave me a task of calling a friend and asked me to think aloud while I do it.

"I'm pulling out my cell phone from my pocket. I see the time on the screen and I swipe up to unlock it. I'm looking for the cell phone icon and then select that. Now I see my contact list and I scroll to my friend's name. I select that, I now see the call button and click that to make a call." I'm going to send you a link in the zoom chat. Please open it up in a web browser, and then let me know once you see it.

[Pause for confirmation]

Okay, now I'm going to ask you to share your screen on Zoom so that we can look at the prototype together.

Zoom Share Screen Directions

## **Tree Test Tasks**

**MODERATOR:** Please read the directions, think aloud and walk me through your thought process as you complete each task. Between tasks, or as you speak, I may stop to ask questions. Please begin.

**Moderated Tree Test Tasks (Bullet questions are suggested follow-ups to help the moderator engage with the respondent if there are additional questions not answered while reading aloud)**

1. You want to know if you can get VA health care It looks like you’re thinking… did you have something in mind that you’re not seeing here? Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information? On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the difficulty of finding this information? Why? I appreciate the readability of the screen. I am going to click about VA, I feel like I am in the wrong spot so I am going to go back home, service member benefits, again not sure, active-duty service members and VA healthcare, and that is where I would find it. That was definitely way harder than the first to. I would say a 8-9 because I was at a lost. I think I would have been down a rabbit hole if I was not so tech savvy. I was looking for the word eligibility.
2. You want to enroll in VA health care It looks like you’re thinking… did you have something in mind that you’re not seeing here? Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information? On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the difficulty of finding this information? Why? My health, VA healthcare and benefits, your healthcare info, and boom that was pretty easy. Now that I understand it becomes personalize right away, I know that is where I need to go in regard to my VA benefits. It feels a little more personalized to me. Now that I have thought about it a little bit it makes sense that my health would be my healthcare coverage.
3. You want to know if you can get dental benefits through VA Were you aware that VA covered dental benefits before today? Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information? My health, VA healthcare benefits, coverage, care and services VA covers, and dental care. I did not know I could get dental care through the VA. My stepfather and father-in-law both use the VA for all their things. It was exactly where I thought it would be.
4. You want to know what types of services and support you can get for your mental health needs Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information? Did you know that you could receive Mental Health services from the VA, even without being enrolled in health care? This should be a big box on the first page of the VA because it is such a huge need. My health, health resources, that is not where I want to be, I feel like I am in the wrong spot, goes back, service member benefits, active-duty service member and VA healthcare. That was a mistake I made I was expecting to see a big mental health button. It needs to be easy. Yes, I knew you could get mental health without being enrolled. Trying to get my brother to understand he needs help as well. I had friend who lost a marriage because of that reason.
5. You want to find out the costs for VA health care services Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information? My health, I am torn between VA healthcare benefits and copay bills, I am going to click on VA healthcare benefits, coverage, care and services VA covers, I am in the wrong spot, goes back, and your healthcare info. I was guessing on that choice. I don’t know whether my healthcare cost would be the same as someone else’s healthcare cost. I would want to see a spreadsheet of all the costs. I was not expecting it to be personalized to me at this point. That was a 9 it was harder.
6. You just received your new disability rating. You want to find out how this could affect how much you would have to pay for VA health care. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the difficulty of finding this information? Why? Again, I don’t know if you need to know this or not the screen does cut off family member benefits off sometimes when you come to this screen. I am going to click on disability, get benefits, eligibility, and there is that magic word so I would find it here. I was looking for eligibility last time. Before I apply for anything I want to know I am eligible. My fear is that we are selecting the first option the first option, would it be harder if I didn’t click the first option. I would say that is a 6.
7. You want to see your VA health records to a non-VA provider Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information? I would have clicked on my health, but I remember the records tab at the bottom, clicks on records, get medical records, and boom. I would want to see my records to go over what I am sending over to my provider. I want to make sure they get the correct information. That was very easy because I remember there was a records tab. Again, I am keen on keywords.
8. You want to check how much you owe for your last medical visit and pay your bill Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information? My health, copay bills, I can see it under the first or second option, but I am going to click on how to pay your bill. That was easy. What throws me off is that on one screen it says my health and on the next page it states your healthcare.
9. You need to request a refill for a prescription you get from VA by mail You seem to be moving fast on this one - why? I really like the option to skip the task. I had to scroll down to see the whole list. I am actually torn between my health and service member benefits, but I am clicking on my health. Pharmacy, refill prescriptions, I like seeing FAQs pages because that is helpful. That task was a lot easier. Again, there was that one spot I wasn’t sure which direction to go in but I went with my health and go to pharmacy. My health is a catchall it may not get me right there it will lead me to the answer I am looking for.
10. You have a question for your doctor and want to communicate with them online You seem to be moving fast on this one - why? All the time I have to do this all the time. My health, messages makes the most sense to me, and I would go ahead a compose. That was the easiest task so far, a 1 or 2.
11. You want to know if VA will pay for you to get health care outside of the VA Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the difficulty of finding this information? Why? Service member benefits, Active-duty service members and VA healthcare. That was very easy because that was task ten if it was the first task it would have been more difficult. This was a 1 only because it was the tenth task.
12. You drove to your VA primary care appointment and want to get paid back for the cost of gas Before today, were you aware that you could get travel pay? Was the answer where you expected it to be or would there be a better place to put this information? I can skip this task if I want to. I won’t skip this one. There is a whole lot of options in front of me. Reads list. Clicks service member benefits, reads list, I feel like I am in a rabbit hole, but I will click on Active-duty service members and Veterans benefits, and I will assume I am at the right place because it is green. I was worried that I was in the wrong place until I saw the green. On the decision tree maybe have bigger bulkier options. Instead of diving straight into housing assistance have a way to search what you are looking for to find the best match. Having fewer options to get to other things. I am hoping by clicking on that tab I was hoping to get more information on reimbursement. I did not know you could get paid for travel.

## **Post Tree Test Follow-up Questions**

**MODERATOR:** Now that you’ve completed all of the tasks, I’d like to ask you just a couple of quick follow-up questions.

* What is the difference between My health and Service member benefits? I like seeing my health because it makes it personable. Anytime you can do that it makes the experience better.
* Would my health make sense to have enrollment under there? Anytime you can make something a one stop shop I love it more. If all those things were under my health that would be so great. On my personal insurance when online I can click on one section, and I can view all my information. I can track my health and anything else I would need. If the VA could adopt practices like that it would be great if they had a cover page to see what issue, he was dealing with and who his doctor was. VA hospitals should all be connected. When there was an emergency with my stepfather, we could not get his records where we were and had to call back to his home hospital to get any of health record.
* My health I would expect to see the records I have and other services that I may be eligible for but not enrolled in. Additional benefits that are available to me. Everything in one spot. Every doctor I am seeing. Just very personalize to my health. It could be a place where you get updates on the VA.
* What was the most challenging part about completing the tasks? Why? Getting familiar to the tree. Once I got familiar with it, I found it easier to navigate. It would be interesting to know how a non tech savvy would handle these tasks. I think the tasks were easy but would be more difficult for someone who does not have my background. I will always be able to find the cheese. I think one of the best things are the VA chatbots that can help navigate the site with keywords. I think someone who is not tech savvy would be comfortable using the chatbots.
* Was there anything good or bad that stood out? Totally love the VA logo I would not hesitate to put that logo on anything because it connects us all. You could make the logo bigger to let people know they are among friends. Don’t be afraid of colors, colors are your friends, and welcoming. Having color schemes for each topic/department. Just make it obvious that you are going in the right direction. Maybe one color active-duty, reserves, retired, or Veterans.
* Does service member benefits include all those that you listed above? That is where I am not sure. Honestly, I don’t know, I struggle with that. It gets confusing, to me it means most I have to read deeper to figure out where I fall into. If there was a drop-down to find out your category.
* Did the menu options and content seem organized in a way that made sense to you? I thought the trees were fine. I thought they were really good. Some of the options that didn’t apply to me or not part of the tasks were higher up on the tree when records were more buried. Burial felt a little too high on the tree. You could get the organization where it would show what you do on the highest part of the tree.
* What is the difference of my health and service member? My health is where I would find information myself, while service member is a more general place to find information for anyone.
* **[H0 only]** Did you find it helpful that all health care related topics were under “My Health” in the navigation? Did it make sense to include eligibility information and how to apply under this navigation labor or do you think that makes sense to live somewhere else?
* **[H1 only]** Did you find it helpful having the label “My Health” under Health Care? When you read that, what was your immediate thought of what kind of things would be under that label? Did you feel that this was a good organization of this information or would there have been a better way in your opinion?

## **Thank-You and Closing**

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.

Do you have any questions or other comments for me before we sign off?

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