**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? Yes, I am.

## **Warm-up**

Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? (If stuck ask about location, occupation, military service history) I am 61 yrs. old, have had various experiences within the military, I went into the Naval academy, as youngster I had connections with VA because of my dad was a military retiree, I knew Jimmy Carter had went into the Naval Academy, and people were telling me that if I went there that it would help me outside of the military. I live in Boston; it is a neighborhood of Boston. I work, I have children and grandchildren.

## **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? I am and I am not because my status is something I am working on. There are some things I qualify for because I sworn into the military, but there are other things I do not qualify for because I got kicked out of the Naval Academy.

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

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?

**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 would click on Service member benefits, that seems most logical place to start, no I would go back because I want to know if I am eligibility. Healthcare, healthcare benefits, eligibility, Veteran eligibility, and I would find it here. Healthcare eligibility, I want that to jump out at me. I know it was just a few more steps, but I want software to think like me, which I know it is not always possible. Do you want to know about healthcare eligibility, yes or no. I don’t recall going to service member benefits, I don’t remember all the steps I took. I would rate it a 2.
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? Healthcare, get healthcare benefits, how to apply, and again too many steps for my taste. If you are a Veteran, you should see it right under the healthcare. I don’t want to have to keep looking for it. You should see it immediately; I don’t want to keep searching. I give that 2 ½. It should be higher on the tree. That is important information.
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? Get healthcare benefits, what services are covered, and dental care. Again, too many steps. Anyone coming to this page is coming for specific things. There should be buttons with each department/important information. No one wants to search. Now that I know where it is laid out, I can find it. I don’t think I would have found it as easily if I had not already gone through the page already. You want to make it as easy as possible. I happen to be doing this all day at work. It has to be about comfort, we have enough shit we have been dealing with, make it as easy as possible.
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? Healthcare, get my healthcare benefits, about healthcare benefits, where you get care, and I would go there. Again, there are too many steps, after going to healthcare it should list out all the departments you can go to. In all these screens I didn’t see anything that stated mental health, if I needed help with mental health, it should be right out front not buried. I did not know you could get mental healthcare without being enrolled. I am not 100% confident in my answer, I would have been more confident if it stated mental health. Just list it under healthcare with the rest of your healthcare needs. That is what I am used to over the phone and online, or even having other if it is not listed.
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? Healthcare, get healthcare benefits, about my healthcare benefits, what services are covered, and then whatever you are looking for picks mental health, and I would find it here. I think it makes sense to pick the service and find the cost. I guess there could be a page you could search through all the departments and their costs. I want the option of both a full page of all costs and a page of specific costs.
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? Disability, manage benefits, view my VA disability rating, and I would find it here. I just want the easy way, I had to think a little bit. For me I just want it spelled out. Give me your disability rating and it would tell me my healthcare coverage information. Something more straightforward. For something like this I just want to get to it. Give me the instant answer, I don’t want to click multiple tabs to get to the answer. Is there a reason you didn’t look under healthcare? Because the keyword was disability, and you can’t have healthcare cost without viewing the rating. That would be a 3, it was more difficult but not impossible. It just depends on the user as well. We are all different.
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? Healthcare, my health, that is familiar wording that I am used to, I see travel pay under here but that has nothing to do with my direct care, medical records, manage your electronic medical records, that seems busy also, and I would find it here. Just a button there that states do you want to send your records to an outside provider, yes or no. It just needs to be simply worded.
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? Under VA benefits and healthcare, I want to see my accounts or billing I don’t want to have to guess where to go next. Go to my health, but I am guessing and only because you told me that it was there. Copay bills and travel pay, I want to be able to view my bill activity and pay my bill at the same time. I would find it there. There should be a button that states billing or view my account because sometimes we don’t understand why we have a bill. I would say this is a 4. My health and my account are not the same thing, my health is about my health, and my account would have to do with money. Copay helped me but it is misleading because it could be a list of copays for different services.
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? My health, pharmacy, and refill prescriptions. And only because I am familiar with the website already. Maybe having a button at the front with the important departments. I am not sure my health would hit me to go there for prescriptions. I want it to pop out at me again because I may not have it to figure out where it is.
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? Healthcare, my health, messages, and compose message. I would click on my doctor’s name and get a message to him. Hopefully there is a mobile app to this. I want able to get there because I was familiar with the site. Having a button right up front is what I think would make it easier to find this. That is a 1 because I am familiar with the site.
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? Healthcare, get healthcare benefits, about VA health benefits, go back up, healthcare, my health, go back up, get healthcare benefits, I want to see what services are covered, cost of care, and I would find it here, but it is not clear. I want to see something that would show me in network and outside of VA. Direct answer I did not know that upfront that you could be seen outside of VA.
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? Healthcare, get healthcare benefits, about VA healthcare services, what services are covered, it doesn’t give me what I am looking for so I go back, I don’t know this is, yeah I am not finding it under the places I would go, again I guess health resources depending how people are thinking, I don’t see it, yeah I don’t see it, I will go back to home. VA benefits and healthcare, service member benefits, not there, healthcare, get healthcare benefits, about VA healthcare benefits, and cost of care. I don’t know where I would go Carl, I am stumped. I guess I would go to about what services are covered and somewhere in there I would like to see other services and in there travel reimbursement. It should be under VA benefits and healthcare, but none of these listed do not tell me anything that tells me where I would go to get payment. You would think under more and it is not there. Why didn’t you look under my health? I didn’t see that; would it allow me to go back?

## **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 was the most challenging part about completing the tasks? Why?
* Was there anything good or bad that stood out? No, I think that the VA has an organization that is working to make things easier for the Veterans.
* Did the menu options and content seem organized in a way that made sense to you? Once you are familiar with it, it becomes user-friendly but if you don’t mess around with it all day you will not find it friendly. If you don’t understand they will just call. In order for them not to call you have to make it easy peasy.
* **[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? I think having My account to deal with financial information and eligibility, and My health is where you would go to get all your health-related information. I think my health information or my health history, something, my health is not clear enough. I didn’t know what that meant right away.
* **[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!