# Conversation Guide: VA.gov Home Page Redesign ROUND 2 Usability Testing

## Warm-up Questions - 5 minutes

Let’s start with a few questions...

1. What kind of device are you using today? *(Computer / Tablet / Smartphone)*
2. I will be sharing a web page link with you during the session. How would you prefer to receive the URL? I could dictate it to you or put it in the Zoom chat. *NOTE how to share URL: dictate / Zoom chat*
3. What VA benefits, if any, do you have experience with? *RECORD: health care / education / career services / disability / housing loans / pension / life insurance / burial benefits / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*
4. How do you typically get information and benefits from the VA? *(Google / Facebook / MHV / eBenefits / Contact center call or email / VA.gov / in person. Sometimes they don’t answer or don’t care so I go to veterans groups. In GA there was a GA military women group and things like the wounded warrior, red, white, blue, and others.* Since moving no groups since it is a tiny town. I moved 3 months ago.
5. Can you tell me about the last time you were looking for information or trying to do something with your VA benefits? Like getting new benefits or getting care. Just basic things, I tried to get the new covid shot and it isn't available at the COBC only the main hospital. I went to ask and have asked serval times since being here and they tell me I have to go to the community to get it. Then the website changed to state it is only available at the main hospital. When first advertising, it they said it would be everywhere.

## User Tasks

Now I'm going to ask you to do a number of things that you may or may not have done before. For each task, I will stop you at a point when I feel like we've done enough, and I won't ask you to sign in.

*(if a task is taking too long, could say "Let's try a different task...")*

### Task 1: [Message your doctor or get a health care message] - Ideally IF *HAVE* VA HEALTH CARE

Let's pretend that you had a doctor's appointment at the VA last week, and now you have a follow up question for the doctor. How could you contact them? I would go to sign in. I like DS login but I think they are getting rid of it. I would send a secure message. I have never tried. Maybe va medical records. I would just sign in and go to my secure messaging.

Doing that on myhealthevet or va.gov: Either, if I am already on va.gov I will do it on there but if I am just doing that, I would go to my HealtheVet. You will need to sign in so why not sign in first. I don’t know how to do it without signing in. this feels backward since you need to sign in anyways. I didn’t know how to do it before so I was looking for contact a medical professional than went to medical records, then went to healthcare and saw send secure message.

What didn’t you find it: medical records. I thought medical and doctor. Popular on va.gov and clicked on va medical records. I was just going to check each header until I found it.

* How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? Maybe a 4, I would rather do it my way by signing in first.

### Task 2: [Show that you're a Veteran (with benefit letter or Veteran ID card)]

Suppose you need to show that you're a Veteran for a special discount at a store. From this web page, how might you request proof of your status as a Veteran? I don’t know I have never done that either. For Lowes and Home Depot you need to do your own thing, you can’t show your veteran card. You need to use govX and it shows on their app. They have had it for years but you used to be able to show the ID card. Maybe under disability. I need something with a name and veteran, maybe a picture. I don’t know if there’s anything with a picture on here. It shouldn’t be a veteran card I don’t know if it would show your picture. The only other thing I could think of is the disability letter.

Did think if is what you need: it wouldn’t show you the ID it is where you would apply for the ID.

Wanted to see it since you already have one: yes, you can’t update it electronically or show you yours so it wouldn’t be helpful.

* How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? I don’t think I found what I was looking for but found what your were looking for. 4

### Task 3: [Find a mental health counselor or therapist]

Pretend that you've been going through some challenges in your life recently, and you want to talk to someone about how you're feeling. How would you do that? That should be everywhere. Right there.

* How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? I mean to me that was a 5, most veterans know what that is. I think it could be bigger.
* Something you’ve seen before: yes, maybe not that color but it’s always on there somewhere.

### Task 4: [Updates in VA benefits (VA promo)]

From this web page, how could you learn about recent changes that may affect benefits and services offered by the VA? besides the PACT act, other than that I would click that page.

What are your impressions of what you're looking at? *The information is fine, they should have done this a long time ago.*

How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? 5, all of the new information is there. If it is old you have to look for it but if you are smart you would sign up for emails. I did that a long time ago.

### Task 4A: [VA news]

How could you learn what else is new--see if there are other stories from the VA that might be relevant to you? There are innovations but that’s not it. I would look for VA news. It should be on the menu though. You can put it at the bottom oh this is a different menu now.

Menu before: yes because this is the va news menu. I mean once you know where to find it you know where it is.

First place looked is the menu: yes everything on this page should be on there somewhere.

Viewing as access to everything: maybe not every link but yes like va news with a new page with a new menu. It’s like a table of content.

* How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? 4 I scrolled and it was down there. Its not hard to find.

### Task 5: [Review or update your dependents]

Say that you just got married. How would you tell the VA about your new spouse? I have no idea. Probably depends. Maybe records, I know it has something to do with disability. Family member. I don’t know where you would go to tell them you got married. Not a clue, I would just call the 1800 number—that’s what I do when I move. I cant see it on here so I would call.

Anything else you might use: I could send a secure message but they won’t do anything but might tell you where to go but you can call and be done with it. you would need to send something in or bring it in. I don’t know why it's not here because I know you get paid more for having dependents. Some of it you can update like emergency contact you can add the spouse.

* How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? A 1, I never found it.

Task 6: [Check the current disability compensation rates]

You'd like to see VA's current disability compensation rates. How would you find these? I would google it because it is easier to find it then it is on here. It shows me my payment history but not the table. I would think it would be right here under disability. Nope. I would like that would be a chart but it takes you further down. The other spot I would look would be the news since it isnt under disability.

Anything else here that you would try: I don’t see a search bar which I would expect to be at the top. I thought it would be by the blue instead of where I found it. That’s not what I want. Clicked on the first thing but it has GI bill stuff. I guess you could add it up. I would have logged off at this point and googled it.

Further down I saw something: I don’t know what that is. I thought I would click on it and it would tell me the amount. This is a weird scale I thought it would tells me how much. I am looking for a scale of this is your disability and here’s your pay. I thought when I clicked on it that’s what it would show me. I don’t know what this is showing me. I think maybe different percentages.

What does that mean to you: nothing but if I read it, it will tell you how to get your actual rating. If you read it, it may make sense, but I didn’t read it.

How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? 1, it shouldn’t be that hard. It should have been fast. Everyone wants to know what they are getting paid. I even used the search button and it wasn’t there.

### Task 7: [Compare VA education benefits and rates by school]

There are several universities in your area, and you want to figure out which one to attend in order to maximize VA's coverage of your tuition and housing. How would you figure that out? They probably have a list on here somewhere. GI bill programs, do they have somewhere I can look up schools. GI bill comparison tool. They didn’t have this when I went to school.

* How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? 4, I think if I were going to school I would be more familiar with it.

### Task 8: [File for a VA disability increase] - Ideally IF *HAVE* VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION

Your hearing loss from your time in the military has gotten worse over the last year and you want to try to increase your disability rating. How would you do that from the web page? Disability. File a claim. I don’t know if increase is different or not. no I would still do that. That was pretty easy. I would file a claim and I would just do it online. I would sign in to start the application and I can do it right here.

You think it would work for increase: I don’t see why not, I did mine and took what I got. I know people play games of trying to get more all the time but I don’t know.

Anything here that confirms you need to file a claim to increase: I think you can because it says that if you are filing for increase to check if you are getting the max for that disability. So I would think you would file here

* How would you rate the ease of finding what you were looking for on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *difficult* and 5 is *easy*? And why? 5, it was under disability where I thought it should be. Hearing should be easy, yes, or no because it’s not like other things.

## Post-Task Interview - 10 minutes

1. What worked *well* for you? It worked well except for what I couldn’t find. The pay chart was frustrating but others aren’t hard to find. The pay chart and I wish the search thing was easier to find. I think it was there when I clicked but then went away. When I do this it’s not always there. I wish the search button was by va. sometimes it goes away.
2. Want it always there: yes. I would want it to work better than with the pay chart. They have sign in there but I would think it would be by create an account or bigger. But when you click on it, it gets bigger.
3. What would you like to *change or add*? No
4. *(IF haven't already discussed)* Can you look under the Search box and tell me about the links you see under "Other search tools"? find a va facility, form, or resources. Facility I might have used when I first moved but I knew where they were. VA form, I could be looking for something specific. There was one I used, it was for community care and urgent care. Something happened with the computers so they could process and I needed to get reimbursed but I googled the form and they told me what it was.
5. *Third think: what ebenfits will they show me. I would click it out of curiosity but I don’t know if I need something there.*
6. *Expected this: I thought it would be a list of things you get at a percentage. For resources, it's good. Change address, I think someone else does that. I have changed the direct deposit so that’s useful and for burial that is useful. Disability is useful for those filing something. If I go back to school it would be useful. Healthcare for when I am older there’s probably a nursing home around here.*
7. *Search is showing but didn’t see: I am used to it being at the top. Maybe on a computer it would show better but we are on the phone and I see menu and think it should all be there. If I am browser I might scroll or if I use it frequently you could put a myHealtheVet link.*
8. *Too far down to see it on the phone: yes and the most important things should be at the top or under the menu instead of scrolling.*
9. *Link useful: yes but it was more of curiosity to get here. As a general overview it is a good source.*

Thoughts on that section: where do they put women veterans or LQBTQ or specialized things. That was my comment. I don’t see it here. I found it. I saw the list there and thought that was the end of the page.

Why: it looks like the end of a page, no fancy writing it looks plain and thought it was the end of the page. Like this it looks like the end.

## Thank You and Closing - 1 minute

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 learn about Veterans so we can improve the online tools that we provide.

If you know any other Veterans, caregivers, or service members who might be willing to participate in a future research session like this one, you can pass along the web link that you'll receive in your email from our team.

Thank you so much again, and I hope that you enjoy the rest of your day!