**Conversation Guide: VA.gov Home Page Redesign Usability Testing**

*Start recording to the cloud.*

* **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.

**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. *(If using assistive technology:)* How would you rate your level of experience with using [specific assistive technology, such as a screen reader]--beginner, intermediate, advanced, or expert?
4. *(If using assistive technology:)* How long have you been using [specific assistive technology]?
5. What VA benefits, if any, do you have experience with? *RECORD: health care / education / career services / disability / housing loans / pension / life insurance / burial benefits / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*
6. What VA benefits that you *don't* have experience with might you be interested in exploring? *RECORD: health care / education / career services / disability / housing loans / pension / life insurance / burial benefits / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ No not a whole lot. I have talked to people who do have benefits, but they are 100% disabled.*
7. Where do you typically go to get information and benefits from the VA? *(Google / Facebook / MHV / eBenefits / Contact center call or email / VA.gov / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) Secure message, in-person*
8. *MHV is what you have used most recently? Can you see all those? I use those quite often. Ebenefits, RX refill, VA.gov, MHV, and travel pay app. I try to use a lot of their apps that come out. I interact with VA with my phone.*
9. Can you tell me about the last time you were looking for information or trying to do something with your VA benefits? I think it was Monday night I was answering a secure message through MHV, and over the weekend I looked at my disability claim to see what the status was. I did that through the VA.gov app.

Did you find what you were looking for? Yes.

**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.

### RECORD FOR EACH TASK...

#### Which task? (select one)

*go back to school to get degree / compare universities / qualify for disability / find a form / increase disability rating /* *amount of disability or education payment / current disability rates / GI Bill money left / find a hospital / get medical history /* *question for doctor / travel expenses / learn about health care / proof of income / new spouse / new address / talk to someone /* *burial in VA cemetery / VA home loan / proof of military service*

#### What participant does and says...

#### I am assuming I would go to payment history and print it off. Clicks link. I would sign in since I already have an account.

#### Ease rating (1-5) and why:

#### 5 because it was right there on the homepage. If I am looking for payment history it was right there plain as day.

#### Which task? (select one)

*go back to school to get degree / compare universities / qualify for disability / find a form / increase disability rating /* *amount of disability or education payment / current disability rates / GI Bill money left / find a hospital / get medical history /* *question for doctor / travel expenses / learn about health care / proof of income / new spouse / new address / talk to someone /* *burial in VA cemetery / VA home loan / proof of military service*

#### What participant does and says...

#### Scrolls down the page. This page is a little bit different than the other page; I know how to do it on the other page. I would probably click on find a form. Maybe? I am not sure what Yellow Ribbon is. Okay I guess that would be it. Maybe. It would either be there of service member benefits. I think I am going to try the service member benefits. Wait a minute. I think I want to view the payment history because I think on one of them you can add a dependent. I am not sure I can do it; I won’t know until I do it. Clicks on payment history. Scrolls down. Yes, here I think I can do it right here. Here it is right here. Clicks add a dependent. Scrolls and reads page. This tells me everything I need to know. I guess it is because I am not signed in is why it would not allow me to add the dependent.

#### Ease rating (1-5) and why:

#### This would be pretty easy. Well now that I know it, I would say 5 because it is like the other page. Well, I will give it a 4 because I am not familiar with it. I have seen some pages like this, but it has some changes. Once I look at it and study it, I would give it a 5.

#### Which task? (select one)

*go back to school to get degree / compare universities / qualify for disability / find a form / increase disability rating /* *amount of disability or education payment / current disability rates / GI Bill money left / find a hospital / get medical history /* *question for doctor / travel expenses / learn about health care / proof of income / new spouse / new address / talk to someone /* *burial in VA cemetery / VA home loan / proof of military service*

#### What participant does and says...

#### Now that I think of it, I do not think this would not be what I want. I thought it would be more laid out more like the previous page. You really do not need a form to add a dependent. That is under your pay history. On here you can change your direct deposit and stuff, but I do not see add a dependent. This does seem pretty easy if you have a form number. I was looking for a form the other day and I could not find it on other pages. I ended up going on Google and found it right away. This would have been a lot easier than what I was looking for the other day. I would just put in the form number, and it would pop up on here.

#### You assumed there is a form you would have to fill out to add a dependent? Yeah, I thought you would.

#### Is there a way to use this page without knowing the form number? I am assuming you can add keywords or the name of the form.

#### Would you not use a page like this because you would have to spell words? No because I have my microphone. God did not bless me with reading or writing, but he blessed me with being able to work with my hands.

#### Does the microphone work on your iPad? Yes, it did. It will not allow me to use my microphone because you have it. That is the way I would do it or if my wife was here, I would have her spell it.

#### Cindy helps spells words. You can get that form there. You want me to pull it up? No, I just wanted to see if it would work for you.

#### Ease rating (1-5) and why:

#### My way 5 because I would have found it pretty quick. I have never been scared to try things and that is why I don’t have issues using the VA apps.

#### Which task? (select one)

*go back to school to get degree / compare universities / qualify for disability / find a form / increase disability rating /* *amount of disability or education payment / current disability rates / GI Bill money left / find a hospital / get medical history /* *question for doctor / travel expenses / learn about health care / proof of income / new spouse / new address / talk to someone /* *burial in VA cemetery / VA home loan / proof of military service*

#### What participant does and says...

#### Scrolls page to check if there is a quick link. I am not seeing a quick easy way. I would just hit the search button and type in change of address. See what happens. Change your address pop right up. Looks like there are a lot of things. I think you could go right there and do it. I am reading over them. I would say the first one would get me where I need to go. Clicks on the first link. Reads title. This right here would do it.

#### Ease rating (1-5) and why:

#### I would say 5 once I searched. I just figured there would be a quick, but you can’t have a quick link to everything like on the common tasks. You just click on it, and you get tot where you need to be.

#### Do you use search on the VA website, is that familiar to you? I use it sometimes, but for the most part there is either a common tasks or a link to where I need to go. MHV you can see your blue button, labs, refill history. It is all fairly easy.

#### Which task? (select one)

*go back to school to get degree / compare universities / qualify for disability / find a form / increase disability rating /* *amount of disability or education payment / current disability rates / GI Bill money left / find a hospital / get medical history /* *question for doctor / travel expenses / learn about health care / proof of income / new spouse / new address / talk to someone /* *burial in VA cemetery / VA home loan / proof of military service*

#### What participant does and says...

#### I don’t watch the news. I watch very little tv. I listen to music more to anything else. If I was having something bothering me. Let me see if there is a quick link or something here. Scrolls page. I would say if something was bothering to me like that I would go to healthcare and see if there was something that says something about mental. I can also call the number and I know they will ask me right away and I can talk to someone really quick. It is a VA 1-800 number that I keep in my phone that I can access easily.

#### What if your friend was having issues would you direct them to the website or give them the phone number? I would probably send them to the healthcare part of here and see if it is there. Clicks links and is reading through the page. I see a lot of things on here I do use quite often. Oh, here is a mental health link and I would click on that. I would direct them to how to talk to someone right now.

#### Ease rating (1-5) and why:

#### I think it is 5 it was pretty easy. A little scrolling and I was there. I knew I was looking for mental health. I figured it would be under healthcare on the homepage.

#### Which task? (select one)

*go back to school to get degree / compare universities / qualify for disability / find a form / increase disability rating /* *amount of disability or education payment / current disability rates / GI Bill money left / find a hospital / get medical history /* *question for doctor / travel expenses / learn about health care / proof of income / new spouse / new address / talk to someone /* *burial in VA cemetery / VA home loan / proof of military service*

#### What participant does and says...

#### I just seen that somewhere. Scrolls down. Clicks on burial and memorials. I would click on more information and resources and that would tell me if I was eligible or not. I think I would go to Veterans burial benefits FAQ and see if it would tell me right there. Right there what are my burial benefits. If I click that it would tell me. According to this I could if space was available. This explains everything. I think this is the way I could find out.

#### Ease rating (1-5) and why:

#### I think it was pretty easy and got there pretty quick I would say 5.

#### Which task? (select one)

*go back to school to get degree / compare universities / qualify for disability / find a form / increase disability rating /* *amount of disability or education payment / current disability rates / GI Bill money left / find a hospital / get medical history /* *question for doctor / travel expenses / learn about health care / proof of income / new spouse / new address / talk to someone /* *burial in VA cemetery / VA home loan / proof of military service*

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#### What participant does and says...

#### Ease rating (1-5) and why:

**Post-Task Interview - 10 minutes**

1. What worked *well* for you? I like the way it is laid out. It is laid out in a way that is easy to understand. I was able to find things quickly.
2. What was *unclear or didn't work well* for you? Nothing. I wouldn’t mind seeing under common tasks a direct link to mental health. That would be quicker. Sometimes seconds can save someone’s life.
3. What would you like to *change or add*? No not really other than that. Everything else is fairly easy to me. I think it is fairly easy. Is this a site that they want to switch everything under because it seems like you can do everything here? Just the mental health thing, it seems like everything else anyone would want to look up is right here. I think under the quick links you can find about anything.
4. I'd like to ask you about a specific part of the first page that you looked at: the dark blue section on Veteran homelessness.
   1. What are your thoughts on what you see here in this section of the page? To me that section would be, if I was homeless, I could go there to get assistance with getting a roof over my head or healthcare. Something along those lines. If I wasn’t in this session, I would probably look at this even though I am not homeless because I see people on the streets and give them the 1-800 number to help them. I don’t even know where I found it, I just keep handing it out. I think I got it off the VA.gov website. I think it is an 800 number you can call if you are homeless.
   2. What kind of information would be helpful to show here? If there is truly help out there, I would like to see the 800 number they could call to get housing and food to let them know there is help out there for them. Clicks on link. Reads over the page. I am glad to see this on there.
   3. If it was not about homelessness here, is there other information you would like to see? I think this needs to be left alone because it needs to be out in the forefront. A lot of people do not know that this assistance is available to them. I wouldn’t change it.
   4. How often should the information be changed?
5. Now I'd like to ask about another part of the page: under "Search VA.gov" where it says "Other search tools". What does that mean to you? First, I don’t know what Yellow Ribbon is. I am familiar with the other links. I don’t know why it is referred to other search tools when they would just be considered quick links to me. It is just a direct way to get to that information. Like a common task.
6. Looking up a bit on the page, tell me about what you see in the bright blue box ("Access and manage your VA benefits and health care", "Sign in and create an account").
7. I'd like to know more about how you usually look for information on web pages in general--not specifically VA or government websites. Can you tell me about a web page that you went to recently and how you found what you were looking for on it? Are you talking about Google or you talking about government website? Not government websites. I find a lot of information Google and YouTube and a lot of forms.
8. Can you walk me through the process? I would look and read through it to see what direction I need to go. Most of the time the webpages aren’t what I am really looking for. A lot of the pages are really easy to navigate.
9. When do you decide to use a search box ? Yes, on Google I do that on there. I’ve been looking for a button you put that into the search bar, you click on the websites they really don’t have that there, I will go to their search bar and search for the item, and it pops up on their websites. They also have a lot of quick links to main parts and then subcategories. I browse through the categories because I may find something else I may need. If I don’t find it that way, I will search.
   1. RECORD: type into search box / click on links (browse) / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
   2. Do you ever use a search box on the page?
   3. If so, when?
10. Is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you think I should know?

**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 email blurb that you'll receive from our team.

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