**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 ma’am I am.

**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 / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Sure, I am just not sure what they are.*
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 / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) and will go to a VA site through Google.*
8. Can you tell me about the last time you were looking for information or trying to do something with your VA benefits? Literally last week because I want to go back to school and complete a degree for work. I was looking for forms and contact information.
9. What did you do? I Googled VA benefits educational and 3-4 things down it took me to a VA website. I would say their benefit site.

**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...

#### Goes to other search tools, and I would also scroll down to see what else is on the page. Clicks on education benefits in other search tools. Scrolls and reads the page. This is what I need right here. How to apply and the eligibility. I would check out eligibility first to see what I need.

#### Is this the site you ended up on when you Googled? Yes.

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

#### 5 because everything was there, and it was listed perfectly on how to apply, and it walks you through. I was here last week. Everything just looks familiar.

#### 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 would go back to education benefits, but then you also have a provider that would help you, a counselor, when you call.

#### You have already done a lot of research on this? Yes.

#### How else besides the counselor would you do? You could also call the school to see if they accept the VA education benefits.

#### If you wanted to do something through this page? Clicks on the education benefits and scrolls down. Reads the page. Clicks on change your GI Bill school or program, if this is not it, I would go back and go to verify school enrollment. I don’t honestly see that. Maybe it is under verify under school enrollment to see what is available. If that is here, I don’t see it. Goes to FAQ on verification of enrollment. No, I don’t see that unless I missed it somewhere.

#### [Can you go back a page?] Yes.

#### You're trying to see what school you should attend. If you are looking for benefits, I would click on change your GI Bill school, I guess the title is confusing me.

#### Yes, you did and decided it did not have what you were looking for.

#### Is there a way to find which school is eligibility? You could verify your school enrollment, but I figure you have to be enrolled. Unless I am reading that wrong. If there are schools available, it does not say that.

#### Can you go all the way back to the first page, homepage? Yes.

#### \*Technical difficulties with tablet\*

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

#### I am going to say it was a 3 up to that one point of what school would accept this it wasn’t there. I did not see that because there is a lot to go through on the page. I just found it easier to ask.

#### Which task? (select one)

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

#### There is VA benefits and healthcare on the top left corner. I would click on that. Reads off the list and clicks on about VA health benefits. This would give me all the information I would need. I would then click on about VA health benefits and the eligibility on this page and how to apply and follow the steps that are listed.

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

#### 5 it is easy.

#### Which task? (select one)

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

#### I know it is a benefit letter and I see that under common tasks. I would click on that, that is what I am going to say. Yup, this is what I want. Everything is there that is nice.

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

#### 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...

#### Scrolls down the page and reads through the headers at the bottom. On the previous page there was information there.

#### Are you trying to go back, and it is not letting you? Yes, because the information was on the previous page. It would be down a little way. Scrolls down the page. It may be under family member benefits or service member benefits because nothing else would apply on this page. I am stuck. I would try the family member benefits. I would say there.

#### If you are able to click on it you can check it out. Reads the page and scrolls down. If you want to add a member, I do not see that. I see the benefits that are available. To add them I do not see where you are adding them.

#### Is there anything else you would try at this point? Keeps reading the page for health care for spouses, dependents, and family caregivers. Clicks on eligibility. Reads page. There is a search bar. Types in

#### \*technical difficulties\*

#### Cindy starts sharing her screen and gives control to participant. Takes control back because participant was still not able to move mouse. I would type in “add dependent”. Click on the first link add or change dependent. That is it.

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

#### I would say 1 because we had to use the search bar, I didn’t see that right in my face. I feel like I had to search a little bit harder. Under the categories there was nothing that said to add a dependent.

#### Which task? (select one)

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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? The very first questions were about education benefits and that is right there. I like that. I think finding the comparison of colleges that is where it got difficult. You can get the umbrella of information, but when you need to get into the depth of information that is where it gets hard. The search bar worked great for information like adding your spouse.
2. What would you search for if you were looking at comparing the schools? Eligible schools and then scroll down. Could you click on eligibility? It talks about eligibility but nothing about schools. I think you were on this page at one point when you were doing it yourself. This is what throws me off, how to use your GI Bill benefits. Can you go back one page? Reads the page. It doesn’t say these are some schools that may be available to make you want to keep digging into it. It was a little bit of a dig. If I was playing around with this more, I would be clicking on everything which means I would be on this page longer than 10 minutes.
3. What was *unclear or didn't work well* for you?
4. What would you like to *change or add*?
5. 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? I like there is additional information on how you can get assistance and see all VA news. I would like to click on get housing assistance now because I want to see what you are sharing with me. There is information on the grants that were give, permanent housing, and some phone numbers to call. It is promoting a homeless program. Scrolls down the page. It shows the same stuff as above. I like that. It has good information. There is something that states eligibility and definition of homelessness. If I was homeless, how do I call the number? What happens if I call the number? What happens next? I guess that is a nosey question, or do you just give enough to get them to call the number.
   2. What kind of information would be helpful to show here?
   3. How often should the information be changed?
6. 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?
7. 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").
8. 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? I usually click on everything that is a link if I don’t see keywords of what I am looking for. If I don’t see it after 2-3 links in, I will go back. Sometimes I will just do a search if the website is heavy with information. I don’t want to have an information overload.
   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? Again, if it is a heavy page with a lot of information, but I also don’t want a page with nothing on it. I want a balance. Enough information when I look at the page, I know I can find the information and if I cannot find it, I can search. If I can’t find the information or if I feel overwhelmed with information, I will search it.
   4. Why did you not use search right when you got on the page? Because when you scroll down there are links to an umbrella of information and if I could not find it on that section I would go back and search keywords. I will take five seconds to go through the page and based off what I see, I may click on things or search.
9. 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!