# 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) I am on a Samsung Galazy CZ Flip*
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 (definitely the 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 / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_VR and E for Masters degree and the VA health for aches and pains I have. So yeah I use those benefits. I may use the Home Loan benefit in the future. I think that’s about it right now*
6. How do you typically get information and benefits from the VA? *(Google / Facebook / MHV / eBenefits / Contact center call or email / VA.gov / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*
7. Can you tell me about the last time you were looking for information or trying to do something with your VA benefits? Yeah, I was just on there last week I believe Thursday or Friday. I was trying to see where my sleep apnea case was because it had been a while since I heard the status of my claim.

Where did you go to check the claim? First, I logged into eBenefits then I believe I just looked for the tab that says compensation and then it usually brings up what claims and what they’re rated as, and what has been denied. It’s like a long list of stuff.

## 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...")*

### IF/WHEN participant wants to sign in before doing a task...

* How would you do that? *(RECORD: "Sign in" button in header / "Create account" button below header /*
  + *"Sign in or create an account" button on a content page > Sign in or Create account link / My VA button )*
* *(If "Create account" button)...*
  + What are your impressions of what you see?
  + Is this what you expected? *(RECORD: Yes / No / Confusion / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*
  + What would you do next? *(RECORD: colored sign-in button / Create an account link below / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*
* *(If not currently on the home page)* Could you please go back to the original page you were on? How might you do that from here?
* Do you have an account? *(Yes / No / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*
  + *(if No)* What do you think about **whether** you **need** an account?
  + Why or why not?
  + *(Given whether they already have an account, did they use the appropriate button/link to sign in vs. create an account? Yes / No )*
* If you were on a public computer and didn't want to sign in, is there anything you could do from this web page?

### 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 sign in with ID.me. When you hit the sign in button on the top.

If you have a follow up question for your doctor: well I would sign in at the top, I would verify with ID.me. Then I would look for my doctor. I think it is “contact your care team” I think. I’ve never tried that before so I am not sure if its like my chart with a civilian doctor.

I could tap the “Health care” button and see if that takes me somewhere. I am just scrolling on this page here. I clicked on VA health care and I'm scrolling all around here but I don’t see how to contact my provider yet. I don’t see that part yet. Nope. I don’t know. I don’t think I would click on that button. It does not look like they have it. Call us looks more like an 800 number. Yeah I don’t see it. Is it supposed to be on 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? Oh, 1. It should be easy. There should just be a button that says contact your provider.

### 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? From this page, uhm, I am looking here. Probably under records: apply for a Veteran ID card. I would think you would have to have a….. so that is what I would do. \*clicks on tab\* Okay, so I tapped the Veteran ID cards. I mean you can use your Veteran health identification card as well so if you are not enrolled in VA I know you can use that as well.

* 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? Uhm, I would say a 3 just because I mean it says VA records. A lot of times people think Oh if I was just to see VA records I would keep scrolling but I think since I am participating in this with you guys I am being more aware of what I am reading. I don’t think I would look for an ID there.

### 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? Oh right there Mental health help. So I am going to tap that. Uhm, let’s see here. Yeah, how do I schedule my first appointment.

* 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 just because it says mental health help. I think not everybody knows what mental health is. Like me I know what it is but I would put more veteran language like “need to talk to someone?” cause that’s basically what we are looking to do. Mental health sounds too clinical for me.

### 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? I would use the Learn more about the PACT act.

What are your impressions of what you're looking at? *(news / benefit / ad / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)* what type of veteran are you type of thing. Like what era did you serve. It's interesting for me because I don’t care about the new law stuff. Bottom line is we like to get to the point. I like the post 9/11 stuff at the top.

How would you get more information about this? *(Learn what the PACT Act means for you / Read the full article / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*

* 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 just because for me I have a PACT act is the newest legislation and I know that the information may apply to me. The question you asked me was about new laws or benefits. I know that the PACT act has to do with your VA benefits.

### 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? *(More VA news / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)* I am just looking here. I think right up there where it says Find Benefits resources and support. I would tap on this and browse by topic. Education, travel, healthcare, yeah that is what I would do.

I do not think I am in the right section. Let me go back. What else is new? Uhm. I could just sign up for the newsletter I think, because I cannot find what else is new unless I am missing it. I would probably get spammed with a gazillion VA emails or newsletters maybe.

* 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? 2 because I went to the wrong spot. When you said new, I didn’t find it but then I found something that could potentially give me new information.

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

Say that you just got married. How would you tell the VA about your new spouse? I would look for dependents on the VA benefits. Oh, family member benefits, I could go there. Oh no, that is if I am the spouse. Yeah I would just go up there underneath dependents on your disability benefits.

* 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? That one was real easy. Id give that one a 5.

### Task 6: [Check the current disability compensation rates]

You'd like to see VA's current disability compensation rates. How would you find these? Like the compensation rates? Okay hold on. Uhm, I think I will go to menu and then search compensation rates and see where that takes me. Now I got to where it says compensation benefit rates and rate tables. Then I will click on 2022 veteran compensation rates.

* 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 would say a 3 just because there should be a tab that says VA compensation rates. It’s kind of like when you go to the grocery store where it says coffee and then you know that drinks are down that aisle. A tab that says “VA compensation rates”. The colors are nice. That is something I like.

### 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? I would scroll down to education and training and then i’d hit eligibility to make sure I was eligible and then I would apply. Right, right. Okay let’s see. Oh, find a yellow ribbon school. I would expect to see: schools because I know yellow ribbon schools have reduced rates and because it says school tuition that Post 9/11 doesn’t cover.

* 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 would say that one was easy so a 5.

### 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? I would go to disability compensation. I am just scrolling on this page. I would hit manage your veterans disability benefits and then I would hit file for a va disability increase. (is this something you have done before) No I have not.

* 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? Oh that was a 5. I got to it right away. It was easy to file. I didn’t have to do a lot of trying to decipher if that would be the right area.

## Post-Task Interview - 10 minutes

*Type into #feedback-backchannel: "Any questions you want me to ask?"*

1. *(IF using a screen reader–ASK WHILE STILL ON A CONTENT PAGE, NOT HOME PAGE)* If you wanted to share your thoughts on this web page with the VA, how would you do it? *(Feedback button on bottom right of page that's not the home page / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*
   1. Have you *ever* done this before?
   2. If so, how, and when?
   3. Could you please go back to the original web page you opened? How would you share your thoughts on this web page?
   4. *(Want to see if screen reader users can/will use the Medallia feedback button)*

Could you please go back to the original web page you opened?

1. What worked *well* for you? I liked the colors and the tabs and the simplicity of it. There is not a whole lot of verbiage. I liked the search bar and the menu. It took some finding the search bar. I mean it took some time finding that search bar. Search bar is under menu.
2. What was *unclear or didn't work well* for you? Uhm, I think trying to contact my doctor and my care provider. I think that was a little wonky for me because yeah, you know I hit healthcare and there is nothing that really says contact your provider. That is when I would probably jump on the phone and just call the VA directly.
3. What would you like to *change or add*? That is a big question. Hold on a second. Let me look here. Again I liked the Explore VA benefits and healthcare and links with the icons and I would move that section to the top. Add little icons to the “Popular on VA.gov”. You could just say claims or education. You don’t have to put all of that extra stuff. One word titles make it so easy. The dependents tab should just say “dependents” instead of VA healthcare just but healthcare. We are already on the VA site. “Travel reimbursement for health care” just put Travel Reimbursements. Just say what it is. Just drop it down to one word. That would help me, yeah. But I don’t know what other vets that you are interviewing say. Just keep it simple. Our training was very you do this you do that. Is it a go or no-go, a yes or no. you just kind of maneuver through stuff that way.
4. *(IF entered email address for VA updates)* What would you expect to happen?
5. *(IF haven't already discussed)* Can you look under the Search box and tell me about the links you see under "Other search tools"? (search bar) usually you search for things are the top of the page. I mean that’s what I am used to. When you’re cruising the internet you just type in the address and it will take you where you need to go. I didn’t even see it until you just pointed it out to me,
   1. What do you think they are, and when might you use them? Find a VA facility: I would think if I was out of the area on vacation and I need to find a facility if I got hurt or sick. Find a form: I don’t think I would use this. Find benefit resources and support: yeah I might click on that just to see.
   2. *RECORD comments about Find VA location, VA form, benefit resources and support*
6. *(IF haven't already discussed)* Do you have an account that you use to sign in on VA.gov? *(Yes / No / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*
   1. *(if No)* What do you think about **whether** you **need** an account?
   2. Why or why not?
7. Is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you think I should know? I am a veteran that is plugged into other veterans, if you have it would be nice to have an area for community where veterans can find the …. And I know on my end being a commander on a VA Chapter it is always hard to find new members. We are vetted into everything but I think that would be cool too. To be able to find other connections: volunteering in your communities. I am active in the DAV and the other one I mentioned was VFW, those are charted by congress. The younger generation are hard to find, so if the VA website had a place for them to come to the VA websites and find out information about us that would be cool too. I like that community connections. I think at the bottom of the page wherever we could get a little piece of the pie here. We do a lot of great things; transportation program that picks veterans up for their appointments, volunteering, we are like in partner with the VA.

## 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!