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

## Warm-up Questions - 5 minutes

Let’s start with a few questions...

Assistive tech: does not use it with smartphone but the tablet they use a screen reader. It reads the text to me and uses it while browsing the web. I don’t normally browse the web on a phone because I can see.

1. What kind of device are you using today? *(Computer / Tablet / Smartphone) Samsung S50 something*
2. Work for the va: No they gave it to me to talk to them because they don’t want me there. It doesn’t have zoom it has the VA Connect app.
3. Staying on the phone, will you see the website on it: That’s what I am doing.
4. 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*
5. *(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? I finally got my speech to read like I do on my TV on my phone. I found where my son hid it. I would say moderate. I am somewhat computer literate but with my vision and concentration issues it makes it frustrating.
6. *(If using assistive technology:)* How long have you been using [specific assistive technology]? A few years now.
7. *On tablet as well: yes*
8. *Same length: longer than that. I want to say about 4 years, then I use closed captions on my TV as well. Noise is an issue with me and it makes it hard to live in an apartment.*
9. *CC on TV, reading it on the screen: yes but it is a smart tv so I can move it around. When I move I am getting a 60 inch so I can see better. My right eye is 20/40 and my left eye is 20/90 and I am legally blind because my glasses do not correct my vision 100 percent. My retinas are wrinkled so it makes it hard to see things in front of me. I have great peripheral vision.*
10. What VA benefits, if any, do you have experience with? *RECORD: health care / education / career services / disability / housing loans / pension / life insurance / burial benefits / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I am in HUD dash program as well. SSI as well.*
11. How do you typically get information and benefits from the VA? *(Google / Facebook / MHV / eBenefits / Contact center call or email / VA.gov / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) I do it online, I text, message. I rarely call because I don’t pay attention to voices so we do a lot of email and text back and fourth*
12. *Which websites: I have an iPad from the va and it is programmed there so I go through my HealtheVet.*
13. *Va.gov: yes*
14. Can you tell me about the last time you were looking for information or trying to do something with your VA benefits? I had to message a doctor tor reschedule my appointment when I have Potts issues it is debilitating. I am learning to live with it, I was born with it and didn’t understand it growing up but when I hit my 50s it came to a halt. It’s age and when something is wrong with the nervous system I pass out a lot.
15. Through myhealthevet: yes I send an email through the email thing and they will send a messages back with what time to be there and what I need to do prior to the appointment. the va likes to schedule it all in one day. I can’t do that I have to break it up so if I need to do blood work they will give me 2-3 days then my appointment.

## 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? Oh I would go to the va healthcare and then go to my HealtheVet from there then email them. It is under popular on va.gov under the other search tool. Clicked on myhealthevet and then signed on and would send a message from there. I sign in and it tells me I can go to my HealtheVet and then I sign in which is programed and everything pops up.

Go to va health then would sign in there: yes then I would go to messaging and message my doctor. I can go to my email to message them as well because I have their emails there as well.

Can you see anything about messaging the doctor without logging in: Yea, va secure messaging toward the bottom. I don’t use schedule the appointments here because my med team has problems with it so I just send them a message and they set it up. I would still need to sign in to myhealthevet.

* 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? It was easy.

### 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? oh that’s simple I just use my VA card. I would sign in and let them know I need one and they schedule an appointment and I go in to get a new one. I have done that before. I would go to the messaging site that I went to before. One of the people I can message is the ID center and I send them a message then they tell me when I can come in to get a new ID. That’s how i do things. I do the same with my housing coordinator but we use google email for her.

* 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?

### 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? I got a counselor so I go to the email and then I email the counselor and they call me. If that doesn’t work then I do the 988 number and talk to the counselor that way. That’s the new number for veterans crisis line.

* 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 would be a 4 because sometimes my counselor gets kicked off of messaging so I need to go to the psychiatrist. The hardest problem is travel reimbursement. They changed it so much its not caught up yet. it took me 3 days to submit for my appointment because they changed how they do things. It's just learning to do it a new way. Once I got it I am good. I hate changes.

### 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 found that once, I have to find it again. I normally go to the va news a lot of times but then explore va benefits is good to. I see education and training one. I would go to the va news first to see what hit the new and then I would look under what they talked about under news and then go to the search menu and type it in and it takes me to where I need to go. It is at the bottom of the screen. It says va news pathfinder the front door for engaging with the va.

What are your impressions of what you're looking at? *(news / benefit / ad / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*

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? Since it just changed I would say a 3 because now I need to figure out what changed and then find what I am looking for.

### 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 would click more va news and it takes me to different articles and I can search for the news I am looking for. That’s how I found out they changed the gas reimbursement. (reading page) or I can go down for latest news. They have a search menu or use to and I don’t see it no more. It just changed.

### 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 go to find va facility because each one has their own way of doing things then search it which is normally at the bottom. In this case is would go to veteran program and services and see how to change person information. I could go to resources and support, in support I should be able to change my stuff. Right here at the beginning I use to find it I could type in what I want to do but this one has change address on file. I would need to type that in to find it because I am not familiar enough. Here’s the legal name change but then it says that you changed your name so then you would put in your spouse.

Not changing name: I would need to go in and change the benefits information. I would put in change benefit information. Before I would email my med team and then I would send them the information and they would do it. I don’t see it in here.

Anywhere else you might look: oh it says all articles. I didn’t get through the whole thing. It says managing you va.gov profile so I would start there. Then from there it should have what I need. Yeah it has it in here where I can add my spouse. It doesn’t exactly say change the spouse information but here it says find an office which is what I would do to find my office then I would search adding spouse to my profile which would then add it to my records.

* 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? 3.5 to a 4 because they changed how you do things again. If you ask for my service records, the place my records were being held was destroyed by a fire. I had a top secret so it was in a different spot and it burnt to the ground so now I have a blank DD214.

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

You'd like to see VA's current disability compensation rates. How would you find these?

* 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?

### 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?

* 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?

### 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?

* 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?

## Post-Task Interview - 10 minutes

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

Share thoughts with the va: I would need to sign in and it use to have a survey where you can feedback in at the bottom

Have you used that before: yes. I have stepped on a few toes.

Most recent time: Oh about a year ago. I have a nurse control my med information. I see her and she cancelled all of my medications. Two of my medications are heart medications and then you have my psychiatric medications then my heart rate medication.

Did you use this to talk about that: yes that was the only way to talk to someone. The direct of Detroit VA called me.

How to share thoughts on the original page: it should be at the bottom but you would need to sign in. most of the pages have a feedback thing where you do the survey but this one don’t have it

Where would you expect it: at the bottom of the screen where most of them are. Oh contact us, I would go there if I couldn’t find the feedback.

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

1. What worked *well* for you?
2. What was *unclear or didn't work well* for you?
3. What would you like to *change or add*?
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"?
   1. What do you think they are, and when might you use them?
   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?

## 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!