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

## Warm-up Questions - 5 minutes

Let’s start with a few questions...

Assistive device: Zoom text, computer talks to me.

1. What kind of device are you using today? *(Computer / Tablet / Smartphone)*
2. *Zoom text: yes.*
3. 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 would be easier*
4. *(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? Um probably advanced.
5. *(If using assistive technology:)* How long have you been using [specific assistive technology]? Zoom text program, I have been using it for probably 8 to 10 years. I run a program called fusion which is JAWS and zoom text and go between both. I am mostly in zoom text because I have a little bit of sight left so I try to utilize it as much as possible.
6. *Something talking to you when looking at webpages: yes*
7. *Keyboard or mouse user: right now I use the mouse because I have some vision so I want to use it as much as I can.*
8. What VA benefits, if any, do you have experience with? *RECORD: health care-salt lake city VA for everything I do / education / career services / disability 100% / housing loans / pension / life insurance / burial benefits / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*
9. How do you typically get information and benefits from the VA? *(Google / Facebook / MHV / eBenefits / Contact center call or email / VA.gov / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) When I need to contact them I go about it serval ways. I am part of our local chapter of BVA so I get information from them along with researching it on the web to find out if I am qualified for benefits or not.*
10. *What website: Several places, John Hopkins University. VA.gov of course. Then there’s another site and once in a while I will google it.*
11. Can you tell me about the last time you were looking for information or trying to do something with your VA benefits? I was turned down but I have a lot of medical drama right now. My glaucoma I had been told by the ophthalmologist that is being caused due to my blood pressure needing to be kept at a low level and at night it falls below the IOP below 50. I put in a compliant for that and I was trying to get it service connected but they came back to say that its not. it was a long process about 3 years before I got anywhere with it
12. Online or in person: both actually. most of it was online and when I got the letter of determination that wasn’t in my favor I felt like the judge that was in DC. He was really rude and I had a lot of rude comments back form them. I did report that to who I could but it didn’t make any difference. My other experiences were good.

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? Va health care. Manmade your healthcare and benefits. Then I would use va secure messaging. I would go ahead and send a message to them.

* 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? Uh probably a 5 because I found it under health benefits. You just need to drive down through. Of course I had to go through four different pages to get there but I got there.

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

Screen reader talking to you: no I turned it off earlier so it would be easier to talk to you. The magnification is at 3 so I am pretty comfortable with this.

How much of the page can you see: probably a little more than half.

Did you need to move the screen to see it: I have it so it comes up and I have the left side of the browser is always at the edge.

When looking at the left side, can you see to the va link without moving the page: yes.

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? Let’s see I would go to va benefits and healthcare. Disability, maybe eligibility. Manage benefits. I found it right there download va benefit letters.

How did you know it would be there: I was guessing, it was on the ebenefits website and it shows it on my home page. I would go to the letters than figure out which one to download. Once a year I have to download that because the county I live in gives me tax relief but they need a copy of my service connect to see how much they give me.

* 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 4 because it was intuitive. Eligibility and va letters don’t really have much in common.

### 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? Mental health help, then I would go to suicide prevention.

* 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? Probably a 4, it was somewhat easy but I did have to look at the bottom of the page instead of it being in the main menu.
* Bottom of the page: yes, the mental health help. I guess I could have done va benefits and health care but I would go under healthcare. I don’t actually see it there.
* What are you expecting to see: one this particular page I would expect something down here that would take me to that suicide prevent page. Maybe I don’t see it.
* Anything else that could get you to that page: Maybe my va or I could search I guess but if I were needing to talk to someone I wouldn’t do a search. If I couldn’t find it scrolling here than I would probably not look any further. It isn't intuitive. Oh now I see talk to the veterans crisis line now, I should have seen it but I see that on all web pages so I looked over it.
* When first asked you didn’t scroll: I was down here so I could see about MyVA. I realize that my screen, the magnification on the screen kind of stops me from seeing everything at once. If I were to take the magnification down then I would see that whole thing. Corner hard to see with magnification on.

### 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? Under about va, I would go to veterans benefit administration. I would go to outreach and transition. Oh recent changes.

Anything further down the page that you would use: maybe resources and support. No I really don’t.

What do you see on this part of the screen: (reading page) I see MyVA, search, contact us, sign in. and that’s what I would see at this point

What about to the left of create an account: va benefit, about va, and find a location, Pact act (reading page). I supposed that might be one thing.

What are your impressions of what you're looking at? *(news / benefit / ad / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) It makes it feel like it is new and expands the eligibility for benefits or care. I guess I wouldn’t have thought that was it. Thinking about it yeah maybe you need to learn what the PACT act is to me. Oh um, I thought it was pretty good. I think the sentence Pact act and your va benefits are larger than welcome to va.gov. I am used to being in that kind of environment than the va and healthcare. I think it should be highlighted because that’s where I am going to go. If I am going on the va site I am going for one of two reasons. To check benefits /claims or va health benefits. Like I said the va health benefits I guess in here i would put my va and about va on the other side because I already know about va so I am not looking to find out about va itself.*

*Not expect to be here to learn but to be here for healthcare or apply: yes. I wouldn’t come here just to look.*

*How often to you visit va.gov: it depends if you are considering my HealtheVet within that. Once a month or a few times a month depending on what I am doing. I like to check where things are and if benefits are there. I get emails all the time that tell me that things have changed or they are thinking of putting something in effect. I go on at least twice a month.*

*My HealtheVet, is that where you go for medical stuff: yes that’s where I go for everything.*

*Don’t go on va.gov to look for benefits: no that’s not what I do*

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?

### 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 / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) maybe down here. I guess I would go to about va.*

* 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 5: [Review or update your dependents]

Say that you just got married. How would you tell the VA about your new 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?

### 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?"*

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 / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) well I guess I would go down here to learn more about aca or groups. (reading page)*
2. *Can you scroll down further, theres a button where you can provide feedback. Are you able to see the button: Oh yeah down here at the very bottom, feedback.* 
   1. Have you *ever* done this before? No
   2. Did you see it before: I probably is visible if I were to scroll down through but usually. All my feedback is by emails back to my provider. She is my key person with the va.
   3. Message through myhealthevet: yes
   4. Not much experience with healthcare form va.gov: no I don’t.

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

1. What worked *well* for you? Um actually the way that I have my web browser set up and the way it comes up on my screen. Welcome to va.gov is an important thing and va benefits and healthcare. I tried to express before that all veterans are either curious about benefits, have applied or have healthcare. That’s where I would go each time I open this.
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!