The use of Internet in medical education

1. Introduction
Since the last decade in the 20 century, the use of Internet has become more and more popular. Internet changes our lifestyle by its wide dissemination of information. We can get the latest knowledge and the message from all over the world, giving us a more convenient life. It changed the way we go shopping, search information, connect with friends, and the education of the medicine.

2. Application
Medical education is a social education. It’s not only about medical student, but the whole population. The application to learn the medical knowledge is very important. Traditional medical education always uses paper or through the classes and doctors. But nowadays, with the Internet, there are more ways for people to get that information.

2.1 BLOG
Blog is also known as “Web Log”. It is a social media that can be written by a single person or a group of people with same topic and interest, and what they write can be read by other people who visit their pages. For example, the New England Journal of Medicine has its own blogging section on their web site www.blogs.NEJM.org.[3]
With blog, we can know the latest news and activities from the writers. Quality blogs always have directly links to the original web site or other reference blogs, protect the guanine of the resources and provide other referent resources for people to reach if they are interested in the topic. Blog gives us a way to get the information, and it is able for the author to have discussion with the readers, giving more activities among them.

2.2 WIKIS
Wikis is social writing software, and its cooperation with the internet allowed the content written by any people.[10] The most famous use of wikis and the internet must be the Wiki, a useful online encyclopedia. It can be an education resource of knowledge that helps people finding information. There are two benefits of Wiki. First, you can find detailed references of every topic. It means that the genuine of the contents is more believable than blog. Second, it can be edited by anyone and at any time, which means people can share the knowledge about the topic and even provide a link to related web site. And the content can be rewritten when we find the error or the theory has been proved wrong.

2.3 Online Platform
“How will we keep learning once we start practicing medicine and leave the capital?”[9] We know that there is no end of the learning in our life, so is medical knowledge. Actually, leaving the campus is the start of learning professional medical knowledge
for doctors—you need to learn by yourselves and combine the theory you learn and the symptom you see on the patients. It is a difficult work for a young doctor without enough knowledge and experience because every patient has different symptoms and feelings for the same disease. So some colleges have provided an online platform for students to connect with their teacher after graduation. It is helpful for the young doctors to ask the problems and question they meet while practicing medicine. It also provides a way for teacher to give the latest news or useful resources to student for extra study. It provides a platform for students to discuss the issue and exchange experience they have although they are in different country and time, creating more activities between student to student and student to teacher. For example, the RAFT network in French-speaking Africa is working on continuing medical education for the graduated students [9]. It can increase the graduated students’ interest in medicine and decrease the bias in their life.

2.4 Others
There are other ways to use internet for medical education. First, the online book store help the students find the latest edition of the books and buy it with e-book, helping us get more professional resources. Second, we can see the video of the class on the internet or other information like the surgery and knowledge. For example, the Youtube, TED and some colleges’ opened lectures. They give student another way to study after class, helping them find out what they are interested in. Last but not least, the social media, such as Facebook, renren and twitter. They help us disseminate the medical knowledge. The mobile devices also have effect on learning medicine with some software like bone site or emergency cure.

3 Defects
Although the internet brings us more convenient and diversiform ways to learn medicine, giving people more methods to take care of themselves and the knowledge of disease around us. There are still some problems that cannot be ignored. For example, there isn’t any rigorous system to judge the resources of the medical information. Everyone, even a person without getting train through medical education can post their opinion online. This lead to the explosion of information, but a large portion of it cannot be trusted—more than two third of the information resources are provided by people without specialized medical train. This phenomenon let the population get the wrong information. It might cause the conflict between doctors and patients. Students usually study through the web by themselves, so the study through the web needs the students to be aggressive, knowing what they want and that they are interested in medicine.

4. Conclusion
Although there are some defects, we can’t ignore the influence of the internet on the
medicine education. The defect can be solved by the policy or other methods. The most important thing for us is to find out a suit way to learn correct medical knowledge.

5. Reference


