Demanding patients
Today there are two options for diseased teeth: endodontic therapy and extraction/implant placement. The rapid growth of the internet over the past decade has resulted in patients being better informed about these options and often expecting their teeth to be saved rather than extracted or replaced.

With this surge of demand from patients and advances in endodontic methods and technology, endodontics has become a recognised field of dentistry in its own right. Endodontic instruments are now so accurate that the length of a root canal can be determined to 0.5mm. This is all thanks to fibre optic illumination, minute video cameras attached to microscopes, sophisticated apex locators and ultrasonic technology.

A rapidly growing industry
The field of dentistry is continually growing and evolving; statistics show that the amount of knowledge required by a General Dental Practitioner (GDP) doubles every five years. Consequently, current undergraduate dentistry education is unable provide the level of detail required for GDPs to feel suitably qualified to perform intricate procedures. In terms of endodontics, it is often when teeth with a more complex anatomy are involved, such as back molars, that further training is needed. For this reason, many dentists choose to follow a postgraduate route of study to specialise in the field of endodontics.

The European Society of Endodontics, a highly prestigious academy of scientists, teachers and clinicians, published guidelines for undergraduate education in endodontics. However, a recently published study in the BDJ critically commented on the coverage of the subject in dental schools throughout Europe. The same European Society of Endodontics is currently developing guidelines for postgraduate endodontic education.

The USA has progressed much further in this field. The American Association of Endodontics published strict guidelines years ago, which are followed rigorously by many dentists choose to follow a postgraduate route of study to specialise in the field of endodontics.

New Course
MSc in Endodontics
Endodontic treatment is one of the most technically demanding procedures in general dental practice. Growing demand from patients for teeth to be saved rather than extracted has presented a need for further training in this area. The Postgraduate Dental Education Unit at Warwick Medical School has developed a new MSc in Endodontics to deliver comprehensive and flexible endodontic education.

Applications are being accept ed new and further information about the course can be found at www.warwick.ac.uk/go/dentistry.