

Fewer false alarms for babies

EDINBURGH A computer system designed to reduce the estimated 19 out of 20 false alarms from neonatal baby electronic monitoring equipment was announced yesterday (Melanie Reid writes).

Alarms in neonatal units are linked to monitoring probes but they can sound when a baby moves or is being handled, for instance when a nappy is changed.

Professor Neil McIntosh at

the University of Edinburgh, said: "We have devised a system that looks at the monitoring data as a whole, for instance changes to the heart rate and respiratory rate together as opposed to individually. This is more likely to indicate if there is indeed a problem."

Prof McIntosh's work is funded by the premature baby charity BLISS. Premature baby numbers are rising, against a falling overall birth rate.

