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**LIFESAVING:** Brioney and Ben Weaver with midwife Jackie Shillingworth showing them the baby monitoring system. **Picture: Glenn Barnes**

## Hi-tech wizardry saves babies

**Sophie Elsworth**

EXPECTANT mothers will soon have their unborn baby's movements monitored during labour and birth using new state-of-the-art technology.

Mater Mothers Hospital will be rolling out 52 digital systems in March to help detect any early signs of fetal heart problems that may occur during labour.

A touch-screen computer linked to a belt wrapped around the mother's belly will closely monitor an unborn baby's progress.

Brioney Weaver, 32, from Mt Gravatt in Brisbane's south, is 36 weeks pregnant with her first

child. She said was very "comforting" to know such advanced technology would soon be available in Queensland.

"I think it's very reassuring to have something like this, particularly being able to visualise that actual positioning of your baby," Mrs Weaver said.

"My obstetrician is across the road (from the Mater Mothers Hospital) and will be able to access the information straight away, that's reassuring."

Director of the Perinatal and Women's Health Services Don Cave said the technology would set off an alarm to alert staff if an unborn baby was suffering

any heart rate problems.

"The Cardiotocograph monitoring element of the system is an integral part of obstetric management, allowing early detection of fetal heart rate problems during labour and birth," he said.

"The beauty of this system is there is a central monitoring system as well, and you have the advantage of not just one pair of eyes observing what is going on, but it's information that's available to a lot of people."

The hospital has received about \$1 million in unclaimed prize money from Golden Casket as part of a three-year commitment to donate \$3.3 million.