



Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, New England Medical Center, Boston, MA

## High-Rise Hospital Addition Builds Function Into Design From The Floor Up

In today's heightened awareness of the mind-body connection, hospitals are required to supply the instruments of healing, as well as a suitable atmosphere for healing. Therefore the building materials used must be more than just "bricks and mortar." All parties have agreed that the use of 20,000 square feet of nora<sup>®</sup> rubber flooring has helped to create such a healing environment for the patients and their families, as well as a favorable working environment for the staff in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Boston's New England Medical Center.

The noraplan<sup>®</sup> smooth-surface rubber flooring that was used meets the need for aesthetics as well as function. The quietly reassuring color scheme was created by Chenling Wang of Tsoi/Kobus & Associates, Inc. From a vast selection of colors, she incorporated four to create a design that is both harmonious and comforting. She felt confident in specifying nora because she was "attracted to the wide color range available" and "knew that the company had a good reputation for quality."

In a hospital, function always plays a major role while proper maintenance procedures and results demand the top priority. Alvaro Quigua, the environmental services manager for NEMC states, "a totally hygienic environment can be created with nora because the heat welded seams prevent bacteria growth, and make it easier to disinfect and maintain the entire floor. And, the subtle tricolor marbled pattern in a matte gray finish helps hide stains and spots for easy maintenance." It is also important that a floor create a safe working environment and nora is both slip-resistant and comfortable underfoot for the hospital staff.

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For the general contractor as well as the architect, the installation process is one of the major considerations when specifying a product. When nora rubber flooring is specified, the flooring contractor can be confident that the manufacturer will be involved in the process every step of the way. Contractor on the NEMC, Tom McCarthy of Congress Flooring Corporation notes, "In a large job like this, we needed a lot of technical assistance, and the nora agent, local sales rep, and technical engineer gave us all the support we needed. We work well together, and the success of our installation is an example of the successful relationship we've maintained with the nora people over the years."