

ST. LOUIS, Mo.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 16, 2004--Centene Corporation (NYSE:CNC) announced today the signing of an agreement with the Great Falls Development Authority in Great Falls, Montana to establish a major processing center in the state. This facility will be in addition to and complementary with the Company's existing centers located throughout the country, and is consistent with Centene's planned growth initiatives for 2005 and beyond.

Michael F. Neidorff, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Centene Corporation, said, "As Centene continues to expand and execute on its business initiatives, it is imperative to have in place an infrastructure as well as resources available to accommodate our ongoing growth and further increase our efficiencies. We selected Great Falls because it offers an excellent business environment, with the ability to attract and retain high-quality personnel to conduct data management functions. It is also consistent with our objective to provide employment opportunities in the U.S. Moreover, the new facility is located in a community committed to a collaborative partnership with us."

John Kramer, President of the Great Falls Development Authority, said, "We are very excited about this collaboration with Centene, which will provide employment opportunities for people in the Great Falls community and make an important contribution to our local economy. I am very proud of the teamwork demonstrated between the Governor's Office of Economic Development, the City of Great Falls and the Great Falls Development Authority. I believe that this team has validated the type of relationship Centene can expect in order to enable them to achieve success in Great Falls and for the entire company. We look forward to a productive and long-lasting relationship."

The Great Falls facility will be integrated fully with Centene's existing processing facilities, enabling employees in different locations to manage data simultaneously. The Montana location also provides geographic diversity for the Company's facilities, which further enhances redundancy objectives.

It is anticipated that the initial capital expenditures for the project of approximately \$7 million will be provided through a combination of funds from the Great Falls Development Authority, the state of Montana and Centene Corporation.

The construction plan is for a 50,000-square-foot facility on a 25-acre site, which Centene has purchased from the Great Falls Development Authority, with an expected completion date of July 2005. Centene expects to occupy a smaller, 8,000-square-foot temporary facility, commencing in November 2004. As part of a multi-phased project to be implemented over the next five years, it will initially employ approximately 40-80 people, who will transfer to the permanent facility next summer. Eventually, Centene anticipates having more than 250 people working at the Montana processing center.

About Centene Corporation

Centene Corporation provides multi-line managed care programs and related services to individuals receiving benefits under Medicaid, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). The Company operates health plans in Indiana, New Jersey, Ohio, Texas and Wisconsin. In addition, the Company contracts with other healthcare organizations to provide specialty services including behavioral health, nurse triage and pharmacy compliance. Information regarding Centene is available via the Internet at www.centene.com.

The information provided in the fifth and sixth paragraphs of this release contains forward-looking statements that relate to future events and future financial performance of Centene. These forward-looking statements represent the Company's estimates as of August 16, 2004. Subsequent events and developments may cause the Company's estimates to change. The Company disclaims any obligation to update this forward-looking financial information in the future. Readers are cautioned that matters subject to forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties, including economic, regulatory, competitive and other factors that may cause Centene's actual results, levels of activity, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, levels of activity, performance or achievements expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ from projections or estimates due to a variety of important factors, including Centene's operating results and cash flows over the next five years, unexpected costs of construction, the rate of growth of the Company's membership, changes in healthcare practices, changes in federal or state laws or regulations, inflation, reduction in provider payments by governmental payors, major epidemics, disasters and numerous other factors affecting the delivery and cost of healthcare and the cost and timing construction of the proposed facility.

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