

ST. LOUIS--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 15, 2006--Centene Corporation (NYSE:CNC) today announced that it has received notification from the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) of a 60-day implementation delay in the Atlanta and Central Regions for Georgia Healthy Families, the new managed care initiative for the state's Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids programs, to June 1, 2006.

Centene's Georgia subsidiary, Peach State Health Plan, was awarded contracts in 2005 to offer healthcare benefits and services to the approximately 780,000 Medicaid eligible recipients in the Atlanta, Central and Southwest Regions of Georgia. Separately, the DCH announcement anticipates that the Southwest Region will commence membership operations on September 1, 2006.

Michael F. Neidorff, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Centene Corporation, stated, "While our subsidiary Peach State is pleased to partner with Georgia on this important initiative, we are deeply disappointed as we have worked diligently to meet the state's timetable and were fully prepared to meet their earlier implementation dates. We will take full advantage of this additional time to focus on other opportunities while continuing to serve our clients and members in our other states. Our focus remains on providing better health outcomes at lower costs while building a leading multi-line healthcare enterprise."

"We are revising our outlook for 2006 to include revenue in the range of \$2.08 billion to \$2.16 billion and net earnings of \$1.53 to \$1.70 per diluted share. This updated guidance includes the effects of the timing delay for our Georgia implementation and expenses related to stock option grants under SFAS No. 123R, "Share Based Payment", which we adopted as of January 1, 2006. This guidance excludes the potential impact of any other acquisitions we may undertake during 2006. Furthermore, this guidance continues to reflect the state's previously announced December 1, 2006 commencement of membership operations in the Southwest Region," stated Karey L. Witty, Chief Financial Officer.

#### About Centene Corporation

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

The fourth paragraph above 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 February 15, 2006. 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 or its industry'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 ability to accurately predict and effectively manage health benefits and other operating expenses, competition, changes in healthcare practices, changes in federal or state laws or regulations, inflation, provider contract changes, new technologies, reduction in provider payments by governmental payers, major epidemics, disasters and numerous other factors affecting the delivery and cost of healthcare. The expiration, cancellation or suspension of Centene's Medicaid managed care contracts by state governments, or any further enrollment delay in the state of Georgia, would also negatively affect Centene.

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