

ARMONK, NY and ST. LOUIS, MO--(MARKET WIRE)--Nov 16, 2006 -- IBM (NYSE:IBM - News) and Centene Corporation (NYSE:CNC - News) today announced the selection of IBM WebSphere Portal to provide online healthcare resources to physicians and patients receiving benefits under the Medicaid plans that Centene manages.

Centene is a leading, multi-line healthcare enterprise that provides programs and related services to individuals receiving benefits under Medicaid, including Supplemental Security Income and the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

Faced with over two million phone calls annually and an ever-increasing amount of paper forms and documents, Centene needed a secure and reliable way to interact online with members and healthcare providers. Centene currently serves over 1.1 million members and 120,000 healthcare providers throughout the United States.

"A key component of our mission to provide quality health services under Medicaid guidelines is the ability to offer personalized healthcare information and resources in a seamless manner both to providers and members," said Glendon Schuster, Centene's Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer. "Therefore, we needed a solution with proven resiliency, flexibility and scalability and we are confident that IBM's WebSphere Portal will address these goals."

The new system will allow Centene's members and healthcare providers to access detailed healthcare program and benefit information regardless of location or time of day. In addition, members will be able to search for providers by location and verify whether a provider is accepting new members. In future phases, members will be able to access personalized healthcare information, find out about common health issues and get valuable tips on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Providers may verify member eligibility for a particular date of service, review detailed member information and review claims history with service-line detail for a specific member. If a referral is needed, the primary care provider can search for appropriate specialists by specialties, by facilities, and by geographic location.

Centene is committed to healthcare that is effective, accessible, comprehensive and coordinated to ensure quality outcomes. This commitment is further reflected by Centene's efforts to alleviate administrative challenges faced by its physician partners. With WebSphere Portal, Centene expects to increase productivity and administrative efficiency for providers, putting the resources they need online in a security-rich and easy-to-access environment.

Information regarding Centene is available via the Internet at www.centene.com.

Information regarding WebSphere Portal is available at www.ibm.com/websphere/portal.

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