

FirstGuard Subsidiary to End Operations in Kansas and Missouri

ST. LOUIS--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 13, 2006--Centene Corporation (NYSE: CNC) today announced that it has received notification from the Shawnee County District Court, which dismissed a FirstGuard Health Plan Kansas, Inc. (FirstGuard) petition seeking review and relief of the decision by the Kansas Division of Purchases to award contracts for Medicaid managed care services; a copy of the petition will be available on Centene's website within 24 hours. On August 25th, the Kansas Health Policy Authority notified FirstGuard, a wholly owned subsidiary of Centene, that its contract would end December 31, 2006.

Previously, Centene announced that it had reached an agreement to sell certain assets of its Missouri health plan. The transaction is expected to be completed during the first quarter of 2007

Michael F. Neidorff, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Centene, stated, "We are disappointed by the District Court action but do not plan further legal action. We are now working with Kansas and Missouri officials to ensure that we meet all financial and operational requirements to accomplish a successful transition of membership and meet our post-termination obligations."

As a result of both of these actions, there will be severance and other costs associated with exiting the Missouri and Kansas markets. The Company's previously issued guidance excludes the effect of any such exit costs.

The information provided in this press release contains forward-looking statements that relate to future events and future financial performance of Centene. 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 payors, 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 would also negatively affect Centene.

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 State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). The Company operates health plans in Georgia, 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, managed vision, nurse triage, pharmacy benefits management and treatment compliance. Information regarding Centene is available via the Internet at www.centene.com.

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