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Centene Corporation Unveils Innovative Healthcare Program for Pregnant Members and Newborns

Program designed to improve health outcomes while reducing costs

ST. LOUIS--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

Centene Corporation (NYSE: CNC) today announced a newly enhanced prenatal, postpartum and newborn healthcare management program called Start Smart for Your Baby(R) (Start Smart). The program - which covers all aspects of managing the pregnancy and newborn period - aims to reduce pregnancy complications, premature deliveries, and infant disease. Through early identification of pregnant members, a wide range of educational materials, incentives for members, and innovative techniques to improve communication, the program's goal is to improve health outcomes for both mothers and babies while lowering the overall costs of care.

Centene is planning to roll out the enhanced Start Smart program through its seven state health plans early in the second quarter. In 2007, Centene's health plans managed more than 60,000 deliveries. Almost 13 percent of these women delivered prematurely (before 37 weeks) and over 10 percent of the babies were of low birth weight (less than five-and-a-half pounds). Though pregnancy complications are not unique to members who receive benefits under Medicaid, these members and the providers who care for them often face unique challenges. Frequently, low levels of health literacy and other socio-economic barriers compound issues that may arise during and after pregnancy.

"Centene has nearly 25 years of experience managing care specifically for people who participate in the Medicaid program. With the enhanced Start Smart program, we are drawing on this expertise to reach our members with critical preventive health information as early in their pregnancies as possible," said Mary Mason, M.D., Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer for Centene. "Our members often have higher risks during the pregnancy and newborn period. We know that it takes frequent communication and innovative techniques to make a difference in the care provided for them during this critical time period."

A vital component of the Start Smart program is identifying pregnant members as early as possible in their pregnancies, as well as completing an assessment of any potential health risks that these members might have. Once identified, pregnant members receive educational materials through a variety of means including mailings, phone contact and in-person visits. Communication techniques have also been initiated to appeal specifically to younger members, including text messaging, an interactive website (www.startsmartforyourbaby.com), and MP3 players pre-programmed with educational podcasts.

High-risk pregnant members without regular access to a phone may also receive a special cell phone with pre-programmed phone numbers to call their doctors, our nurse triage line, and their case managers. Finally, special kits containing helpful information and gifts are provided to mothers with babies in the NICU. Centene plans to use a series of centralized and streamlined reports to track, monitor and report on outcomes for members that are enrolled in the Start Smart program.

About Centene Corporation

Centene Corporation is a leading multi-line healthcare enterprise that provides programs and related services to individuals receiving benefits under Medicaid, including the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The Company operates health plans in Arizona, Georgia, Indiana, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas and Wisconsin. In addition, the Company contracts with other healthcare and commercial organizations to provide specialty services including behavioral health, life and health management, long-term care, managed vision, nurse triage, pharmacy benefits management and treatment compliance. Information regarding Centene is available via the Internet at www.centene.com.

Source: Centene Corporation