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Centene's Arizona Behavioral Health Unit Awarded Expanded Contract

ST. LOUIS, March 17 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Centene Corporation (NYSE: CNC) announced today that one of its subsidiaries, Cenpatico Behavioral Health of Arizona (Cenpatico), has been awarded an expanded contract by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Cenpatico Behavioral Health of Arizona currently manages behavioral healthcare services for more than 17,000 members in Yuma, La Paz, Gila and Pinal Counties. This new agreement renews and expands Cenpatico's coverage to an additional 5,000 members in four new counties including Santa Cruz, Greenlee, Graham and Cochise. The contract takes effect July 1, 2010.

"Our staff has dedicated itself to improving the lives of people with behavioral issues while properly managing the funds provided by state and federal programs," said Terry Stevens, chief executive officer of Cenpatico Behavioral Health of Arizona. "This is very exciting news for us. We look forward to serving our new members and to helping them reach their recovery and wellness goals."

Based on current projections, Centene expects the expanded agreement to generate additional annualized revenues of between \$40-\$45 million.

About Centene Corporation

Centene Corporation is a leading *multi-line* healthcare enterprise that provides programs and related services to the rising number of under-insured and uninsured individuals. Many receive benefits provided under Medicaid, including the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), as well as Aged, Blind or Disabled (ABD), Foster Care and long-term care, in addition to other state-sponsored programs, and Medicare (Special Needs Plans). Centene's CultiCare subsidiary offers states unique, "exchange based" and other cost-effective coverage solutions for low-income populations. The Company operates local health plans and offers a range of health insurance solutions. It also contracts with other healthcare and commercial organizations to provide specialty services including behavioral health, life and health management, managed vision, telehealth services, and pharmacy benefits management. More information regarding Centene is available at www.centene.com.

Cenpatico Behavioral Health of Arizona, LLC™ (Cenpatico) facilitates the delivery of mental health and substance abuse services to behavioral health recipients in the Arizona counties of Yuma, La Paz, Gila and Pinal. Cenpatico embraces the Arizona System Principles, the Arizona Children's Vision and Principles, and Principles for Person with Serious Mental Illness (Arizona principles), which express the ADHS/DBHS commitment to a build consumer-driven system that is responsive to the needs of behavioral health recipients, families, stakeholders and communities. Cenpatico is a subsidiary of Cenpatico Behavioral Health, LLC™ (CBH).

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.

SOURCE Centene Corporation