

DROZDA JOSEPH P JR
 Form 4
 December 20, 2005

FORM 4

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
 Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
DROZDA JOSEPH P JR

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
CENTENE CORP [CNC]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)
7711 CARONDELET AVENUE, SUITE 800
 (Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)
12/16/2005

____ Director _____ 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) _____ Other (specify below)
Exec. VP Chief Medical Officer

ST. LOUIS, MO 63105

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
 Form filed by One Reporting Person
 ____ Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| | | | Code | V | Amount (A) or (D) Price | | |
| Common Stock | 12/16/2005 | | M | | 7,000 A \$ 13.58 | 35,900 | D |
| Common Stock | 12/16/2005 | | S | | 7,000 (1) D \$ 25.95 | 28,900 (2) | D |

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4) | 8. Amount or Number of Shares |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
| Common Stock | \$ 13.58 | 12/16/2005 | | M | 7,000 | 08/26/2005 08/26/2013 | Common Stock | 7,000 |

Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address | Relationships | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------|--------------------------------|-------|
| | Director | 10% Owner | Officer | Other |
| DROZDA JOSEPH P JR 7711 CARONDELET AVENUE SUITE 800 ST. LOUIS, MO 63105 | | | Exec. VP Chief Medical Officer | |

Signatures

/s/ Joseph P. Drozda, Jr. 12/20/2005

__Signature of Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
- ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) Sale pursuant to a 10b5-1 Trading Plan established March 16, 2005.
- (2) Mr. Drozda's ownership includes 2,000 restricted stock units which vest in 5 equal annual installments on the anniversary of the grant date beginning on December 13, 2006.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.