*Instructions: Please find below suggested wording for a letter to your family members. If possible, you might consider talking to your relatives about your BRCA testing first and then sharing the letter with them to help them remember what you discussed. Please read through this letter and make any changes you feel are needed. If possible,* ***include a copy of your genetic testing results*** *or informational sheet on your particular genetic change (mutation) with the letter. These results will be important for your relatives when they speak with their healthcare providers. This letter only applies to blood relatives and not “in-laws.” Blood relatives include your parents, grandparents, children, siblings, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.*

Dear [xx],

I recently had genetic testing for inherited mutations (changes) in the *breast cancer 1* (*BRCA1*) and *breast cancer 2* (*BRCA2*)genes. These are the genes most commonly affected in breast and ovarian cancer. My test found a[*BRCA1/BRCA2*]mutation that causes an increased risk for breast, ovarian and other cancers*.*

As one of my blood relatives, you could have the same *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* mutation and could benefit from genetic counseling and possibly genetic testing for this mutation.

If you find out that you have the mutation, you can take steps to reduce your risk of cancer and to find cancer earlier if you do get it. These steps include preventive surgery, medications, and earlier, more frequent, and additional cancer screening. It is important to note that if you have a *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* mutation, it does not mean that you will definitely get breast or ovarian cancer.

People who inherit a mutation in the *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* gene are more likely to get breast, ovarian, tubal, peritoneal, prostate, and pancreatic cancer. In general, women with a *BRCA* mutation are more likely to get breast or ovarian cancer before age 50 than women without a *BRCA* mutation. Men with *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* mutations also have a higher chance of getting breast cancer.

The attached document shows the specific mutation that I have. This mutation is the one for which my family members should be tested. People can inherit *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* mutations from their mother or father. Since I have the mutation, my parents, [brothers/sisters/children (include any of these that you have)] have a 50% (1 in 2) chance of having it. My other blood relatives (aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins) also have an increased chance of having the mutation. Please note that genetic testing for *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* mutations is not recommended for children under 18 years old, but can be considered when they reach adulthood.

Finding out that I have a *BRCA* mutation can help me take steps to reduce my future risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer, and you could benefit from knowing whether you have this mutation, too. The first step is to discuss this with your doctor who can provide you with more information about *BRCA* testing. Your doctor may refer you to a genetic counselor. You can find the genetic counselor closest to you at <http://www.nsgc.org/>.

For more information about *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* mutations and cancer, here are some helpful resources:

* <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/young_women/bringyourbrave/hereditary_breast_cancer/index.htm>
* <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/young_women/knowbrca.htm>

I understand that it can be hard to hear that you and others in our family could have a *BRCA* mutation. However, knowing about your risk is the first step in protecting yourself from getting cancer, and I want to help make sure that you and others in our family know about this important information. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[ ]