Sample Condolence Letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

I learned of the death of Sally S\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ through my associate Dr. Smith. Although her death was expected please know that you are not alone at this time.

(acknowledge the loss and the name of the deceased; express your sympathy)

Sally was a courageous young woman who never faltered in her determination to fight her illness. I admired the way she thoroughly researched all available treatment options, asked direct and open questions, and remained optimistic.

(note special qualities of the deceased)

I recall the time Sally came to my office after her first chemotherapy treatment looking sad and upset. She had suffered severe side effects from the chemo and was very tired. We had a long talk during that visit and Sally thanked me for being open and honest with her. She came over and gave me a hug and I will never forget that moment. Sally was a very special human being.

(Recall a memory of the deceased)

Sally was always so close to you, her mother. I was impressed with how strong you have remained during her illness and how you were always present during Sally’s last few days. I plan to phone you within the next few weeks to see how you are doing.

(Remind the bereaved of their personal strengths; offer help but be specific)

You are in my thoughts and prayers,

(End with a word or phrase of sympathy)