Search for truly blue migrants

WE'VE all heard the old legend about grumbling Brits, but is there some truth in the idea that migrants are more likely to feel down in the dumps?

The University of NSW Dementia Collaborative Research Centre is looking for older British and Chinese immigrants to study the effects of migration on mood.

Researcher Bee Wei said studies in North America and Europe had shown moving to a new country is associated with higher rates of depressive symptoms in migrants compared with native citizens, including a loss of interest in activities, feeling blue and lack of energy.

"Acculturation is the process whereby a migrant develops a new cultural identity by integrating his old and new cultures, and older migrants have been shown to acculturate less than younger ones, making the migration process more stressful."

British migrant Roger Smith, 77, said his move to Sydney had been difficult.

"Making a whole new circle of friends was stressful - I only knew one person here," he said.

"And the British and Australian humour is quite different: the British humour is much drier."

The research will be the first project to explore the issue in Australia.

Researchers are looking for British or Chinese migrants aged over 65 who have lived in Australia for more than five years to complete a 15-minute survey in English or Chinese, either online or in hard copy.

To do the survey call 665-384 or go to www.surveysmonkey.com/s/ acculturationunsw

TRANSITION - Some older migrants find the switch to a new culture difficult.